

## Walesa visits Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Polish President Lech Walesa went before Israel's parliament on Monday to ask forgiveness for his nation, where three million people died during the World War II Nazi Holocaust. Mr. Walesa was praised for his fight against communism and as a leader of a new Poland. But everywhere on his visit, including in the parliament where aging Holocaust survivors sat before him as legislators, the Polish leader met the past. Mr. Walesa, born in 1943 as Nazi horrors unfolded, is the first Polish head of state to visit Israel. His four-day visit was seen as a quest for peace between the two peoples. "Here in Israel, in the cradle of your culture and religion, I am asking your forgiveness," Mr. Walesa told the Knesset, or parliament. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir told reporters after meeting Mr. Walesa that he accepted the Polish leader's plea for forgiveness. "I think there was nothing more natural than this (request). I accept it very favourably. After all today we are establishing normal ties between the two peoples and two countries. It's good that people are aware of what happened in the past," he said. Mr. Shamir said he had accepted Mr. Walesa's invitation to visit Poland.

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## Morocco creates new province

ASSA, Western Sahara (AP) — King Hassan II of Morocco, on a tour of the Western Sahara, has announced the creation of a new province, one day after saying it will honour the results of a U.N. referendum on the future of the disputed territory. The king on Sunday announced the creation of the province of Assa-Zag, telling people of the region that the government would get to work on infrastructure "right away." On Saturday, King Hassan affirmed that results of a U.N. referendum on the future of the Western Sahara would be irreversible. The United Nations Friday adopted a \$180 million budget for its mission for the organisation of a referendum in the Western Sahara, known as MINURSO. The population will vote on whether the vast desert region remains under Moroccan domination or gains independence. The referendum is scheduled to be held 36 weeks after the adoption of the budget, in early 1992. King Hassan was in town of Smara, heartland of the region, when the U.N. budget was adopted. Morocco annexed the territory, the former Spanish Sahara, in 1975 and has since then waged a costly war on Algerian-based Polisario Front guerrillas seeking independence for the region.

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## White House — Sanctions should stay on Iraq

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House said Monday economic sanctions should remain on Iraq until Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is gone from power. "All possible sanctions will be maintained until he is gone," said White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater. He said that because of Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion and occupation of Kuwait, "Saddam is discredited and cannot be redeemed." He said discussion was continuing on whether the United Nations would allow a partial lifting of the sanctions to allow Iraq to export oil to begin paying reparations to Kuwait.

## U.N. to give \$17m in food to Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — The United Nations will send food worth \$17 million to Iraq, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported Monday. INA said Iraqi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Said Al Sahhaf signed a "memorandum of understanding" with the representative in Baghdad of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Saleh Bourguini, for providing Iraq with 35,000 tonnes of food. It did not say how and when the shipment will be delivered. INA quoted Mr. Sahhaf as saying the shipment would be "devoted to the aged, women and children."

## Kuwait recalls Sudanese pilots

KHARTOUM (R) — Kuwait Airways wants its Sudanese pilots and engineers to return to work, a Kuwaiti diplomat told the official Sudan News Agency. Thousands of Sudanese worked in Kuwait before Iraq's invasion last August, when many fled. For most of them their chances of returning to their former jobs are in doubt because Kuwait wants to reduce dependence on foreign workers, especially from Iraq. SUNA quoted the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Khartoum, Mohammad Al Nasir, on Monday as saying the airline was calling on all Sudanese pilots and engineers to return immediately and resume work.

## Saudis say oil still leaking from Kuwaiti, Iraqi ports

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia said Monday that oil was still spilling into the Gulf from damaged Iraqi and Kuwaiti export terminals nearly three months after the end of the Gulf war. The Dhahran-based Meteorological and Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) said an aerial survey on Sunday showed crude oil leaking from Kuwait's Al Ahmadi port, sunken oil tankers near Iraq's Al Bakr port and from the Bakr export terminal itself. "The survey team has noticed that the spillage is still continuing from all these sources. Diminishing visibility has prevented investigation into whether there are other sources," the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) quoted MEPA as saying in a report. The state-run Saudi Aramco says it has mopped up nearly one-sixth of the six million barrels estimated to have poured into the Gulf during the war that ended in February.

## Briton in space links with Mir

MOSCOW (R) — A Soyuz spaceship carrying the first British cosmonaut linked up with the Soviet Mir orbital station on Monday, TASS news agency said. Soyuz TM-12, manned by cosmonauts Anatoly Artsebarsky and Sergei Krikalyov and 27-year-old British chemist Helen Sharman, docked at 1431 GMT with the station that has been the mainstay of the Soviet space programme for the last five years. The spaceship had blasted off from the Baikonur space centre in Soviet Central Asia Saturday. Ms. Sharman is expected to return to Earth on May 26 with the current crew of Mir, Musa Manarov and Viktor Afanasyev, who have been in space for more than five months. Artsebarsky and Krikalyov will then stay in space for their own mission.

## U.N. sets up fund to channel Iraqi revenues to pay for war damages

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. Security Council Monday voted overwhelmingly to create a compensation fund for victims of Iraq's takeover of Kuwait.

The council voted 14-0, with Cuba abstaining, to create the fund, which will have its governing council in Geneva.

Fund officials will decide what portion of Iraq's oil profits will be set aside to pay war damages and how often payments will be made into the fund.

The U.S.-initiated resolution also threatens to retain sanctions indefinitely if Iraq does not abide by the decisions of the council or its subsidiaries on compensation payments, which are estimated at billions of dollars for Kuwait alone.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar will set the ceiling on the percentage of Iraqi oil revenues that may be used to pay claims from individuals, corporations and governments.

U.S. officials have argued that up to 50 per cent of Iraq's oil revenues should go into the compensation fund, while developing countries have called for as little as five per cent.

Britain has recommended about a quarter of Iraq's oil revenues be used to pay claims, basing the figure on the percentage of Iraq's revenues allegedly previously spent on arms.

Iraq has asked for a five-year moratorium on such payments, saying its foreign debts and reconstruction costs were exorbitant.

To close any possible loopholes the new resolution demands compensation payments for any oil Iraq has sold since April 3, including oil contracted for earlier "but not delivered or not paid for" because of trade sanctions imposed by the United Nations last Aug. 6.

However, Iraq's assets abroad and its considerable foreign debt accumulated before the war will not be part of the compensation fund.

Once the fund is set up, Iraqi monies in the United States, Switzerland, Britain, Japan and other countries will be unfrozen. But various nations will probably institute claims against them for debts.

The resolution, which gives legal force to a two-week-old report by Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar, established Geneva as the venue for a policy-making governing council.

This group is to comprise envoys from all 15 states on the Security Council. Their decisions are to be taken by a majority vote, with no state having veto power.

But it specifically notes that other sections of the fund involving damage claims may be in other cities. British and Kuwaiti officials are lobbying to have the war damage fund in London, Geneva and the Hague, in the

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His Majesty King Hussein Monday meets Portuguese Foreign Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro (Petra photo)

## Portugal supports U.S.-led peace efforts

AMMAN (J.T.) — Portuguese Foreign Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro Monday paid a one-day visit to Jordan to talk with His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri on Middle East questions and bilateral relations.

The talks with the King covered regional and international issues as well as issues of common interest to Portugal and Jordan, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Mr. Deus Pinheiro discussed with Prince Hassan regional cooperation, and future relations between the European Community and the Arab World.

The Prince reviewed initiatives for peace and various proposals to achieve security and stability in the region based on U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The Prince and the Portuguese minister reviewed Israeli practices in the occupied territories, including its continued building of Jewish settlements on Arab land, Petra said.

Prospect for European help to apply a Helsinki-style formula for security and cooperation within the Mediterranean basin was also discussed at the meeting, which was attended by Foreign Minister Masri.

Earlier, Mr. Masri held a meeting with the Portuguese minister on peace efforts, the Arab-Israeli conflict and Jordan's role in the peace process.

The two sides stressed the need for Israel to halt its settlement programmes so as not to endanger the peace process, Petra said.

Mr. Deus Pinheiro, who arrived here in the course of a tour of the region, said that he made the visit in order to have a close hand look into the situation in advance of Portugal's assumption of the chairmanship of the European Community (EC) presidency in July.

He said that he intended to discuss the consequences of the Gulf war, Europe's relations with the Arab World and other issues of common concern.

The Portuguese minister voiced his country's total support for American efforts for peace in the Middle East.

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## King meets Kaddoumi

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday discussed with Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the political department of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), U.S.-Soviet efforts to arrange Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Mr. Kaddoumi conveyed to King Hussein greetings of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. King Hussein and Mr. Kaddoumi discussed the ongoing peace efforts to resolve the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Palestinian problem and reviewed the latest developments on the Arab arena, the agency said.

The audience was attended by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's political advisor, the King's military secretary and the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan.

Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri indicated Monday that Jordan and the PLO had no problem over the concept of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian team to attend peace talks.

"There is no formal agreement yet, we have not established the delegation," he told reporters at the airport after seeing off Portugal's foreign minister.

"The idea is floating and the principle in principle is accepted."

Mr. Arafat is due to visit Jordan soon to coordinate moves.

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His Majesty King Hussein Monday meets with PLO Political Department head Farouk Kaddoumi (Petra photo)

King meets British MPs

King Hussein received Monday at the Royal Court members of the foreign affairs committee of the British House of Commons. King Hussein briefed the committee members on efforts being made to resolve the Middle East problem and stressed the need to continue these efforts to reach a settlement of the problem based on international legitimacy.

The meeting was attended by Sharif Zeid and the King's military secretary as well as the British ambassador in Amman.

## Palestinians mark Tel Aviv massacre with protests

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians went on strike and staged marches Monday in memory of seven Gaza Strip labourers killed a year ago when an Israeli gunman opened fire at a group of Palestinian workers in a Tel Aviv suburb.

The shooting in Rishon LeZion, in which 11 Palestinians also were wounded, sparked a series of protests in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in which seven other Palestinians were killed and hundreds injured.

As the strike was underway, police found the body of a grocer with stab wounds in his shop near Tel Aviv on Sunday morning. They were investigating whether the motive for the slaying was robbery or Palestinian nationalism.

Israel Radio identified the victim as Reuven David, 60, saying he was stabbed fatally in the neck and that his shop was in the town of Petach Tikvah.

In occupied Jerusalem, a spokesman for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) alleged an Israeli border policeman buried two tear-gas canisters into a truck delivering flour to the West Bank village of Turmus Ayya.

Spokesman Sandro Tucci said the Muslim fundamentalist movement Hamas urged a day of escalation in memory of the "martyrs of the Rishon LeZion massacre."

In the villages of Abasan and Bani Sueiba, home to most of the seven victims, black flags flew from rooftops and verses of the Koran were read over mosque loudspeakers.

Reports said that hundreds of students marched in the two villages, carrying black flags, wreaths and portraits of the seven workers. No clashes with soldiers were reported.

The incident on May 20, 1990, occurred when dozens of Gaza Strip workers were waiting at a so-called "slave" market, where Israeli employers hire Palesti-

nians for day labour jobs, usually in construction.

A former Israeli soldier named Ami Popper arrived with an automatic rifle, ordered the workers to sit in rows, then opened fire. Popper has been convicted of murder and sentenced to seven life terms in prison.

Survivors later said they followed Popper's orders because he had a gun and was wearing army pants. He had been discharged from the army as being mentally unbalanced, but a psychiatric panel found he was capable of standing trial.

The massacre was recalled in graffiti throughout the Gaza Strip. One slogan signed by the unified national command called on "the masses of the Gaza Strip to escalate their struggle."

A Hamas slogan said "Let's burn the land under the feet of the Zionists."

In the West Bank, the General Federation of Trade Unions issued a statement urging workers to stand for a moment of silence in memory of the seven victims. It also said that the killings were "not done by a mentally disturbed soldier" but were well planned.

Four Palestinians staged a sit-in at the Red Cross offices in Lebanon.

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## Iraq lodges anti-Iran complaint with U.N.

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq has filed a complaint with the United Nations saying that Iranian guerrillas infiltrated and killed more than 100 people.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said late Sunday the bodies of 52 Iraqis were found near Kut Al Sawadi in southern Iraq on May 1 and an additional 48 bodies in the same area on May 2. The city is about 150 kilometres southeast of Baghdad.

"The Iranian infiltrators carried out a mass execution of the two groups after tying the martyrs' hands behind their backs, blindfolding them, and pushing them down to the ground in the area of Kut Al Sawadi," the agency quoted Iraq's complaint as saying.

INA quoted the complaint as saying most of the victims had been shot in the head and that some corpses had been mutilated. It said I.D. papers had been removed to make identification difficult.

Southern parts of Iraq have been torn by a Shiite Muslim rebellion, and Iraq has repeatedly accused Iran of assisting the rebellion.

INA did not say why there was a delay in uncovering the slayings.

The report said the bodies of other Iraqis slain by "infiltrators" were found on May 14 in the southern sector, but gave no other details.

INA said the Iraqi complaint to the United Nations accused Iran of "bestial crimes against the Iraqi forces" and said they constituted a violation of the Iraq-Iran ceasefire agreement that ended the 1980-88 war.

More than 34,000 Iraqi Kurdish refugees have returned to Iraq from Iran since Sunday and a shortage of vehicles slowed down the return of thousands more, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported on Monday.

Quoting an official in Bakhtar province, the agency said 34,382 Iraqis crossed back into

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## Barzani 'very satisfied' with progress in Baghdad talks

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Kurdish rebel leader Massoud Barzani was quoted on Monday by an Iraqi magazine as saying he was "very satisfied" with progress made in talks with the government on greater autonomy for the Kurds.

"I and other members of my delegation are very satisfied," said Mr. Barzani, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) leader who is heading eight rebel groups in the Baghdad negotiations.

"I am confident that we are on the brink of a new phase of Arab-Kurdish brotherhood based on mutual confidence and aimed at achieving a united Iraq," Al-Jazeera magazine quoted him as saying in an advance copy of its Wednesday edition.

Mr. Barzani called on his Kurdish compatriots, many of whom fled to mountains on Iraq's borders with Iran and Turkey after their failed rebellion last March, to return to their homes in northern Iraq "as soon as possible," it said.

"We have discussed with our brothers, the officials in Baghdad, all prerequisites for security and stability and we are confident none of them (refugees) will stay abroad," he said.

Mr. Barzani said on Saturday that an agreement in principle was reached with the government on a 20-point plan to introduce democracy in Iraq but differences over regional autonomy was holding up the signing of a peace deal.

He said a final agreement was being delayed by Iraq's continued rejection of a key demand by the Kurds to include the oil city of Kirkuk in an autonomous Kurdish region.

U.S. troops arrived in the northern Iraqi provincial capital of Dohuk Monday to assess how to restore city services.

The troops, part of an 80-member team of civilians and specialist soldiers sent in to examine sanitation, water and electricity needs for thousands of Kurdish refugees who the West-

ern allies are trying to coax home, briefly set up camp on a hilltop near the town centre.

"The withdrawal of special police from Dohuk, elimination of the Iraqi checkpoint outside the city and presence of survey teams there indicates a climate sufficient for the Kurds to start looking to return to their homes," an allied statement said, citing officials involved in the Western relief effort.

Iraq gave permission for the visit to Dohuk, just outside the allied security zone in northern Iraq, after a lengthy series of talks between U.S. and Iraqi generals.

Apart from the fleeing U.S. presence, another token of international interest was evident on the streets of Dohuk.

Wearing blue baseball caps, 10 beefy U.N. security guards armed with pistols prowled through town in an air-conditioned fleet of white U.N. vehicles.

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## Lahd says treaty with Syria may block Israeli withdrawal

BEIRUT (AP) — Israel's main Lebanese ally said Monday that ratification of a treaty giving Syria special relations with Lebanon would block Israel's withdrawal from the south.

Antoine Lahd's statement came as consultations were under way between Beirut and Damascus on a date for presidents Hafez Al Assad of Syria and Elias Hrawi of Lebanon to sign the treaty.

The treaty is part of an Arab League-sponsored plan to help the Lebanese government take back control of its territory from warring militias and to remove Syrian, Israeli and Iranian troops from the country.

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## UNICEF estimates hundreds of cholera cases in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — A Senior United Nations official said Monday he was worried about cholera in Iraq and estimated that the number of cases could be up to ten times more than the 94 reported by Iraqi authorities.

"Certainly we are pre-occupied now, very worried," said Gianni Murzi, the representative in Iraq for the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Mr. Murzi and the director of Baghdad's Qadisiyah General Hospital, where all 12 cases in the capital have been confirmed in laboratory tests, said the situation was under control and nobody had died.

But Mr. Murzi said the figure of 94 cholera cases in 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces "could be from half of the true cases to only 10 per cent" because poor communications made collecting information difficult.

Mr. Murzi said the scattered incidents of cholera did not point for the time being to an epidemic

although UNICEF had asked for 60 more tonnes of drugs and medical supplies to be flown to Iraq to boost precautionary stocks.

Iraq has blamed cholera on U.S.-led allied bombing of its water and sewage systems during the Gulf war.

It says conditions worsened with the flight of more than 1.5 million refugees to Turkey and Iran after government troops crushed post-war Shiite Muslim and Kurdish rebellions.

Mr. Murzi said many cases of typhoid had been diagnosed in border areas with Turkey and Iran. But he could not confirm that cholera had come in from those countries and said the disease was endemic in Iraq.

Ahmad Hardan, director of Iraq's centre for communicable diseases, said the last cholera outbreak was in 1978 when about 1,000 people were hit by a strain

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## Mubarak reshuffles cabinet

CAIRO (Agencies) — President Hosni Mubarak appointed Amr Moussa, 54, Egypt's permanent U.N. representative, as foreign minister replacing Esmat Abdel Meguid, Egypt's state-run television said Monday.

Boutros Ghali, 68, minister of state for foreign affairs, was promoted to deputy prime minister for foreign affairs, international co-operation.

The shakeup was intended primarily to fill two vacancies in the four-year-old cabinet of Prime Minister Atef Sedki. But it also included the surprise replacement of the defence minister. No reason was given.

The decree said Lt. Gen. Mohammad Hussein Tantawi, director of military operations, replaced Gen. Youssef Sahry Abu Taleh as defence minister.

Boutros Ghali, who was the Foreign Ministry's second man as minister of state, was promoted to deputy prime minister responsible for foreign relations and was given the additional portfolio handling Egyptian expatriate affairs.

Mr. Ghali, the Islamic country's highest-ranking Coptic Christian, had been minister of state for foreign affairs since 1977, when Mr. Mubarak's predecessor Anwar Sadat launched a Middle East peace initiative. Mr. Ghali was among the architects of the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

The education portfolio, vacant since its holder Ahmad Far'hi Sorour became parliament speaker last year, was assigned to Hussein Kamel Bahadddin.

Mahmoud Sherif, Cairo's governor, was appointed minister of local government, a new portfolio

in Mr. Sedki's 31-member cabinet.

Mr. Moussa has been considered for some time a rising star in Egypt's diplomatic hierarchy. He was a member of the National Committee for Taba, a border enclave that Egypt recovered from Israel in 1989 after a seven-year diplomatic and legal battle.

Mr. Mubarak gave evidence of his high regard for Mr. Moussa last August by summoning him home from the United Nations for an Arab summit to deal with Iraq's invasion and approved dispatch of Arab troops to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.

Mr. Ghali has been extremely close to Mr. Mubarak on foreign relations, particularly regarding European and African affairs, since the president took office in 1981 after Muslim extremists assassinated Sadat.

Government sources admit that Mr. Ghali's religion probably accounts for his failure to become foreign minister. Like the defence portfolio, the foreign ministry and most other ministries traditionally have been held by Muslims.

Mr. Mubarak appeared to try and make it up to Mr. Ghali, however, by raising his cabinet rank and giving him the expatriate portfolio in addition. This meant dropping from the cabinet Fouad Iskandar, minister of expatriate affairs and one of three Copts in the previous cabinet.

Gen. Tantawi, the new defence chief, played a key role in planning the operations of Egyptian forces sent to Saudi Arabia with the U.S.-led military coalition.

When U.S. Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, who commanded

coalition forces, visited Cairo last month en route home from the Gulf, he had special praise for Gen. Tantawi as well as Lt. Gen. Salah Halaby, commander of the Egyptian task force.

In a separate decree on Monday, Mr. Mubarak named Mr. Halaby chief of staff of armed forces, apparently in recognition of his Gulf service. Gen. Halaby replaced Lt. Gen. Safieddin Abu Shafar, whose tour of duty ended.

Gen. Tantawi, 56, fought in the 1956, 1967 and 1973 Middle East wars. He served as military attaché in Pakistan and Afghanistan and commanded the 2nd army in the Suez Canal area. He had charge of the elite Republican Guards, responsible for the president's safety, before becoming director of military operations.

A seasoned diplomat and an academician, Mr. Ghali has been in the cabinet without interruption for 14 years, a record in 35-year-old republicanism. He moves with ease from diplomatic chancelleries and negotiating tables to university auditoriums to lecture on his speciality, international law.

Dr. Ghali, named for his grandfather, Prime Minister Boutros Ghali Pasha, hails from an old family with roots in southern Egypt.

Foreign Minister Moussa, who will work under Dr. Ghali's supervision, began his foreign ministry career as attaché in 1958. He was ambassador to India for four years until 1987, when he was appointed director of the ministry's International Organisations Department. He was named head of his country's U.N. delegation in 1989.

## Right and left gain in Cypriot election

NICOSIA (AP) — Rightists and leftists committed to talks on reuniting this divided island scored gains in parliamentary elections, officials reported Monday.

The right-wing Democratic Rally led all parties in Sunday's voting with 35.8 per cent. The Communist Party, Akel, won 30.6 per cent, up from 27.4 per cent in the last election in 1985.

Both support President George Vassiliou's policy of pursuing U.N.-backed talks with the Turkish Cypriots who have held the northern part of the island since a 1974 Turkish invasion.

Mr. Vassiliou, an independent, retains his post regardless of Sunday's balloting.

Democratic Rally gained one seat, to 20, in the 56-member parliament. Akel gained three seats, to 18.

Democratic Rally leader Glafkos Clerides said after the vote that his party has "cooperated with all the political powers on the island and will continue to do so."

Cooperation will be essential because no party holds the majority needed to elect a new president of parliament when the new legislature meets on May 30.

Akel leader Demetris Christofias told reporters his party's local operation "has counterbalanced the negative impact coming from abroad," a reference to the collapse of Communist parties in Eastern Europe.

The main loser in the election was the centre-right Democratic Party of former President Spyros

Kyprianou, which slipped to 19.5 per cent, giving it 11 seats. The party, known as Diko, had taken 27.46 per cent at 16 seats in 1985.

Mr. Kyprianou opposed direct talks with the Turkish Cypriots, arguing they were bound to fail.

He said he would not take his seat in the new parliament and said the poor results "were a rejection of Diko's policies on the national issue."

The Socialist Party, Edek, which also criticised Mr. Vassiliou's stand on talks with the Turkish Cypriots, won 10.9 per cent of the vote and seven seats. It had taken 11.1 per cent and six seats in 1985.

Two new parties failed to gain seats in parliament. Adisok, a reform Communist Party which split with the old-line Akel, gained only 2.4 per cent of the votes. Pakop, a party formed by refugees from the Turkish-held zone, had only 0.6 per cent.

Election officials said that more than 94 per cent of the nation's 381,177 voters cast ballots. Voting is required by law.

In all, 297 candidates were vying for seats, according to the elections commission. Three were independents.

Voters cast ballots for individuals, but could not choose candidates from more than one party.

The campaign was lower key than in previous years. Under new election rules, loudspeakers were banned and election posters were limited to prearranged hill-boards.

## Qadhafi: Abu Nidal not in Libya

CAIRO (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi said Sunday that Palestinian guerrilla chief Abu Nidal, named by Washington as head of the world's most dangerous group, was not based in Libya.

"Abu Nidal does not work from Libya," said Col. Qadhafi at a joint news conference in the Libyan coastal town of Ras Lanuf with visiting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"He is not in Libya. Since the first and the second Gulf war, he is no longer here, Col. Qadhafi said in remarks carried by Egypt's national Middle East News Agency (MENA).

The first Gulf war, between Iran and Iraq, lasted from 1980 to 1988. The second Gulf conflict started on Jan. 17 and ended on Feb. 28 when U.S.-led forces pushed Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

Sahri Al Banna, better known by his nom de guerre Abu Nidal, is accused by the United States of carrying out over 90 attacks since 1974 in 20 countries.

Abu Nidal split from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1973. Since then he has topped the international wanted lists for attacks.

Shortly after Iraq invaded Kuwait last Aug. 2, U.S. administration sources said unconfirmed reports suggested that Abu Nidal may have returned to Baghdad after a seven-year rift.

He was headquartered in Iraq from 1974 to 1983, but when he fell out with the government he moved his operations to Syria until 1987 after which he was reported to have gone to Libya.

Qadhafi said there was an Abu Nidal in Libya, but he was a Libyan doctor who worked for the Red Crescent Society.

"He is in charge of the Red Crescent and there were telegrams coming out of Abu Nidal's camps which were in fact Red Crescent camps," Col. Qadhafi said.

"We went to these camps, searched them and found the Libyan Abu Nidal, not the well-known Abu Nidal."

Mr. Mubarak, according to MENA, interrupted Col. Qadhafi and said: "It is true, Abu Nidal is not in Libya."

Mr. Mubarak's visit to Libya was the last leg of a trip which took him to Italy, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Turkey and Syria.

He was seeking European support for debt reduction of Egypt's \$35 billion foreign debt as well as backing for a Middle East peace conference to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

## Iran calls for regional arrangement

WELLINGTON (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati called Monday for a regional security arrangement in the Gulf that would involve Iran and keep the presence of foreign powers to a minimum.

"The experience gained from the 'Persian' Gulf crisis necessitates the creation of a sort of security arrangement in the region which guarantees independence and territorial sovereignty of the countries in the Gulf," he told a news conference.

"It is our hope that the 'Persian' Gulf region will be free of classic armament stores as well as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and that the presence of foreign powers in the region be minimised."

## War trials fail to faze Kuwaitis

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — The start of martial-law trials for people accused of collaborating with the Iraqi occupation drew little public attention Sunday in Kuwait's opulent Palace of Justice.

Two women, hoping for word about sons arrested right after liberation and not heard from since, were the only civilian spectators to show up in court.

Inside, maintenance workers cleaned dust from chairs and closed windows, assuring reporters and diplomatic observers that the air conditioning was in fact working.

Charges were read off rapidly by the presiding judge, without benefit of corroborating witnesses or other evidence.

No one, for example, produced the Saddam Hussein T-shirt that was a factor in one defendant's receiving a 15-year jail term.

The sixth floor courtroom seemed an example of some of the Kuwaiti wealth.

The judges sat behind a massive teak bench. Behind them, a six-metre wall was covered in an intricate design that echoed the motifs of Islamic art during its golden age around the 11th century.

The bottom half was a mosaic of Arab scenes mostly in green and blue tiles, while the carved stucco above it was delicately designed in pale blues and browns.

The art contrasted starkly with the brown metal cage holding the prisoners off to one side.

Dressed in a variety of T-shirts and pajama tops, they were brought in with tight plastic cords on their wrists. Some immediately buried their faces in their hands when they were released.

The one woman defendant had a guard of her own in a regular seat on the opposite side of the courtroom. She quietly proclaimed her innocence to the first reporter who walked over.

## British troops to stay in 'insecure' Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Britain's Defence Secretary Tom King said Monday that it would be months before the approximately 1,100 British troops stationed here go home because the emirate remained insecure about Iraq.

"There is still a nervousness in Kuwait after all the shocks that they experienced with the original invasion," Mr. King said, addressing several hundred soldiers of the 2nd battalion Royal Anglian Regiment gathered in the desert 100 kilometres north of the city.

Mr. King said the date for the final withdrawal would be set soon, but it would depend in part with talks scheduled for later Monday with Crown Prince Saad Abdullah Al Sabah, who is also prime minister, and consultations within the cabinet of Prime Minister John Major in London.

Mr. King, who is also visiting

Saudi Arabia, is to return to Britain on Wednesday.

He said he thought it would be "some months" before the British forces could withdraw.

"If anybody asks 'when?', you won't get a straight answer. We think it should be pretty soon," he said.

There have been some complaints among the troops, who were told April 1 that they would be in the desert in seven days, that they could not make any plans because they did not know how long they would be in Kuwait.

They were told April 30 to prepare to withdraw, but the order was cancelled three days later.

The defence minister tried to assure them that they were doing an important job.

"The need for you to come here was vital because we have to

make sure that people here continue to have the confidence, the reassurance, that we won't disappear right at the end of the battle, but will continue to keep our interest and be willing to help," he said.

Mr. King said British forces had played an important role in liberating Kuwait in February after seven months of Iraqi occupation.

He said they needed to finish the job by making sure that "Kuwait stays liberated and there is no doubt in our determination to see the Gulf now become a much safer and secure place."

With Iraq now accepting the peace terms set by the United Nations and with troops from the United Nations deployed, Mr. King said the need for British troops here had diminished. Some would stay indefinitely in advisory roles, he said.

Air Vice-Marshal Ian Macdymen, commander of British forces in the Middle East, said there were 1,100 British troops in Kuwait and 5,600 in the whole area, including forces at sea. At the peak of the conflict Britain had 5,000 troops in the region.

Kuwait has expressed interest in keeping some allied troops deployed on its territory, while Saudi Arabia has said it wants all foreign troops to withdraw from the kingdom and has discouraged stockpiling arms there.

An Arab plan for a joint regional force collapsed when Egypt decided to withdraw its troops, reportedly out of pique that Kuwait preferred Westerners.

The United States has about 5,000 troops in Kuwait and Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said last week that new troops would be deployed in mid-June and remain at least until Sept. 1.

## Hostage issue plagues CIA nominee and Bush

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's an issue that has plagued three American presidents and could put President George Bush's nominee for Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director, Robert Gates, under painful scrutiny: American hostages.

Failure to free 52 Americans held by Iran helped end Jimmy Carter's presidency. Trading arms for the release of hostages held by Iranian-backed radicals in Lebanon haunted Ronald Reagan.

What did Mr. Bush know about efforts to free the Americans in Iran and when did he know it? What did Robert Gates know and when did he know it?

The last month brought new stirrings of hostage deals. A top Carter aide, Gary Sick, said five sources told him Mr. Bush met with Iranian officials in 1980 to seal a deal delaying release of the 52 hostages in Tehran to prevent Mr. Carter's reelection.

Mr. Bush angrily denies it. Travel logs place him in Washington during dates in October 1980 when he was supposedly in Paris

amid questions over his role in the Iran-contra scandal.

He hadn't known much about the White House's secret deals with Iran, Mr. Gates insisted to the Senate Intelligence Committee in February 1987.

"I basically lost touch with the project" early in 1986, Mr. Gates said under oath.

What about a troublesome Nov. 25, 1985, Hawk missile shipment to Iran that occurred without written authorisation from Mr. Reagan? Mr. Gates said the first he heard about anything going to Iran was at a Dec. 5, 1985, meeting with CIA officials.

"There were some references to a plane that had flown a week or so before," Mr. Gates said. "We didn't know what that plane was or anything about it, but there was discussion with the operational people in the room about the fact that there were likely to be other such planes."

But months after his confirmation hearings, the Iran-contra congressional committees released notes taken by another CIA official in that Dec. 5 meeting.



George Bush  
ing. The notes detail a discussion of hostages and weapons, something Mr. Gates didn't mention.

## JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO  
18:00 ..... Les Raisons Laveurs  
18:30 ..... Sidone Cauche  
19:00 ..... News in French  
19:15 ..... Aujourd'hui en Jordanie  
19:30 ..... News in Hebrew  
20:00 ..... News in Arabic  
20:30 ..... Perfect Strangers  
21:10 ..... Doc. "Costeau"  
22:00 ..... News in English  
22:20 ..... Columbo

## PRAYER TIMES

04:40 ..... Fajr  
05:22 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
12:32 ..... Asr  
16:13 ..... Maghreb  
19:32 ..... Isha

## CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweithah Tel. 810740.  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785, 685326.  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990.

## Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Tarmount Church Tel. 623668  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628541.  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Assent International Church Tel. 685326.  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811293.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

## WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A drop in temperatures will occur and some clouds will appear at different altitudes. Winds will be northerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

	Min./max. temp.	Yacoub pharmacy	644945	Price Complaints	661176
Amman	16 / 25	Shmeisat pharmacy	637660	Water and Sewerage	
Aqaba	21 / 35			Complaints	897467
Deserts	15 / 31	IRBID:	(—)	Amman Municipality	
Jordan Valley	20 / 34	Dr. Lutfi Al Shalabi	(—)	Complaints	787111
		Al Sharaf pharmacy	(275825)	Telephone Information	
				(directory assistance)	121
Yesterday's high temperatures: Am-		ZARQA:	(—)	Overseas Calls	010230
man 28, Aqaba 37. Humidity readings:		Dr. Mishbah Hijawi	(—)	Central Amman Telephone	
Amman 28 per cent, Aqaba 14 per		Khalifeh pharmacy	985417	Repairs	623101
				Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
				Jordan Television	773111
				Radio Jordan	774111
				Water Authority	681001
				Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
				Electric Power	636381
				Company	681001
				RJ Flight Information	68-3330
				Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-3330

## INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)3200-5, where it should always be verified.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
15:00 ..... Moscow (SU)  
06:15 ..... Khartoum (SP)  
06:15 ..... Bucharest (RO)

ARRIVALS  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
08:15 ..... Singapore, Bangkok (RJ)  
10:35 ..... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
10:55 ..... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
11:15 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
17:00 ..... Montreal, New York (RJ)  
17:45 ..... Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
13:30 ..... Moscow (SU)  
15:35 ..... Beirut (ME)  
23:15 ..... Khartoum (SP)  
06:05 ..... Bucharest (RO)

DEPARTURES  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
09:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
11:45 ..... Istanbul, Belgrade (RJ)  
12:10 ..... Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)  
12:45 ..... Rome, Madrid (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER  
QUEEN ALIA

## MARKET PRICES



## Government under heavy criticism from leftists, nationalists

AMMAN (J.T.) — Several political parties, associations and organisations strongly attacked the government Monday for what they called a series of "anti-democracy" actions that aim at taking the country back to pre-democracy days.

In a statement addressed to the "Jordanian masses" four umbrella groups representing mainly leftist and nationalist ideologies said that the measures were reflected in "clear government attempts to paralyse the role and effectiveness of Parliament" by incorporating some parliamentary blocs into the government and by giving them a "comfortable mechanical majority" and rendering the people unable to express themselves.

"This has been going on at a time when citizens of this country proved, over the past two years, that they were capable of shouldering national responsibility and abiding by actions that tend to serve the cause of public interests — a tendency that is helping to bridge the gap between government and people, a process that could not be possible before April of 1989," said the statement.

It noted that the measures and recent practices of the government were only bound to increase tension and public indignation, tended to undermine the past achievements and sowed seeds of discord, suspicion and complaint.

"These government practices," the statement continued, "can only increase anxiety and concern over actions pursued by forces hostile to democracy through cancelling political and social achievements."

The statement pointed out that the government's ability to "paralyse" Parliament and stop it from enacting democratic laws and holding public officers to account for their past deeds "is causing further strains and concern among members of the public."

"The government has succeeded in doing that and chose to incorporate certain parliamentary blocs in government blocs and granted such blocs a mechanical majority in Parliament," the statement added. "These measures have disrupted the march of democracy," it said.

The statement asked the government about the fate of its promises to cancel martial laws, about passing the national charter that would have opened the way for political pluralism and arrangements for assuming political life.

The statement accused the government of re-opening talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to "increase the burdens on the public."

The statement said that "the series of measures adopted lately reflect the existence of an official will to take this country backwards." The statement did not specify the "measures."

ons only add to the popular tension and indignation and stab in the back all of our achievements until now," the statement added.

The Jordanian Arab National Democratic Association (JANDA), the National Jordanian Youth Coalition, the Central Council for Jordanian Professional Associations and the Jordanian Women's Committee for the Strengthening of Arab were the signatories of the political statement.

In general terms the statement pointed to the continued application of martial laws and the delay in the announcement of the national charter as the steps that need to be crossed before "political life is reorganised."

The statement however accused the government of hindering political meetings and peaceful marches, continuing a policy of arrests and interrogation and limiting the freedom of the press.

These measures, the statement says, "are covered up with illogical excuses."

However, sources inside JANDA criticised the final draft of the statement saying that it failed to mention important issues such as education and the limited number of parties who signed it.

The statement called for public pressure on Parliament's various blocs, exercising their role as representatives of the people and a watchdog over the actions of the executive authority.

It urged members of the public to adopt proper measures to put an end to "various government actions that run counter to the democratic process," and urged Parliament members to refrain from granting the government a vote of confidence "now that the government has misbehaved political, social and economic matters."

The statement called for a national economic conference to discuss the economic situation in Jordan and to study various problems plaguing the economy with a view to finding drastic solutions for such problems as unemployment, pollution of King Talal Dam water and farming in the Jordan Valley.

The statement called for the construction of democratic institutions after abrogating the martial law and all the laws that restrict public freedoms. It called for amendments to the election law and for opening the road for teachers', students' and farmers' unions to become operational.

The statement urged the Jordanian public to "preserve the accomplishments for which the people of Jordan had paid so dearly and to act now to stop any move backward as being planned by the enemies of democracy, especially those "enemies who are trying desperately to allow American plots to be executed in this region and who are opening the way for U.S.-sponsored solution



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday inaugurates an exhibition displaying products by women in Irbid (Petra photo).

## Princess Basma attends ceremony

IRBID (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday attended a graduation ceremony of a group of young women from the Irbid Social Services Centre and voiced appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its continued support and backing for this project.

The 70 graduates had undergone a training course aimed at improving their efficiency as vocational training instructors at centres operated by charitable societies and the social service centres in the Irbid Governorate.

The graduation was the first fruit of cooperation between UNDP and Queen Alia Social

Welfare Fund (QAF) which is sponsoring the project, said the Princess in an address at the ceremony.

QAF, she said, seeks to enhance the Jordanian women's role in socio-economic development and enable women to become productive members of society.

The group graduating this course, the Princess noted, will not doubt enhance the operations of the voluntary and charitable organisations' activities.

The Princess voiced appreciation to the guidance committee which has been supervising the implementation of the project.

The committee groups representatives of QAF, the ministries of planning and social development and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) in addition to the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS).

The Princess distributed diplomas to the graduates who had spent two months in the practical course to upgrade their skills in instructing seamstresses.

She later opened an exhibition displaying samples of work in dressmaking, tricot and traditional crafts. Later the Princess heard a briefing on the centre's activities and plans to develop programmes.

## Jordanian, Egyptian political groups reject foreign presence in Iraq, demand peace in region

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two political groups in Jordan and Egypt seeking to enhance solidarity among Arab countries Monday issued a joint statement emphasising their rejection of foreign presence on Arab land, support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty and independence of Iraq, and demanding a just and durable solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict and the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people in their own homeland.

The two groups, which took part in a Soviet-Arab dialogue held in Amman in the past week, said that they had held meetings in Amman, on the sidelines of the Arab-Soviet dialogue, and agreed on the following points:

1- The two sides reject the presence of any foreign force on Arab land and demand a speedy withdrawal of all foreign military troops and equipment.

2- The two sides reaffirm the unity and territorial integrity of

Iraq and reject all attempts to partition that Arab country into sects, and demand that all sanctions and embargoes be lifted.

3- The two sides urge all concerned international parties to help find a just and durable settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict in a manner that would ensure a comprehensive and just peace in the region, that can guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people to an independent state on Palestinian soil, and the right of the Palestinian people to determine their own future and participate in all international dialogues and efforts aimed at solving the Palestine question. The Palestinian side should be represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

4- The two sides voice their full

call for speeding up endeavours to heal the rift in Arab ranks and end all inter-Arab differences.

5- The two sides call for a meeting by all solidarity committees in Arab countries, before the end of this year, in implementation of resolutions taken at a meeting held in Damascus last November. They also decided that Cairo should serve as the headquarters for the coming meeting in a bid to display further determination for deepening the trend towards solidarity among Arab countries.

The two groups were: the Egyptian Committee for Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity and the Jordanian Peace and Solidarity Committee.

The former was represented at the meeting by Ahmad Hamroub, Hilmi Al Hadidi, Saad Kamel and Al Sayed Yassin, while the Jordanian committee was represented by Fares Nabulsi, Hassan Khreis, Ibrahim Abu Ayyash and Issa Mdanat.

## World Bank grants APC \$15m loan

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Bank has approved granting the Arab Potash Company (APC) a loan worth \$15 million to contribute to financing the first stage of a project aimed at boosting the company's production to 2.2 million tonnes by the year 1995, up from 1.4 million at present.

The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has approved granting a \$16 million loan to the APC to contribute to financing the first stage whose total cost is estimated at \$110 million.

The company's two-stage programme entails the introduction of two production lines, with a total annual capacity of 400,000 tonnes each, APC Director General Ali Ensour had said in a press release.

According to Mr. Ensour, the first stage will be implemented between 1991 and 1993 while the second will be completed by the end of 1995.

He said the government was giving due attention to chemical industries, based on the Dead Sea salts, and had contracted three consultancy firms to conduct feasibility studies.

"These firms have completed the first phase of the study which was debated last month to pave the way for the second and final phase which would be completed by the end of this year," Mr. Ensour said.

About 85 per cent of APC's total production in 1990 was sold to Asian countries. Those countries are India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan.

## WHO meeting urges Israel to allow investigation into Palestinians' conditions

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Health Organisation's (WHO) 44th meeting held in Geneva in the past week called on the Israeli authorities to allow a group of WHO specialists to visit the occupied lands to investigate the health conditions of the Palestinian people, according to Health Minister Adnan Jaljoui.

Speaking upon return from the WHO meetings, the minister said that the conference had underlined the need to pressure Israel into changing its attitudes and deal with shortcomings in health services offered to the Palestinian people.

The WHO meeting discussed a range of questions related to the health of mothers and children, combating infectious diseases, pollution to the environment as well as the difficult health conditions in a number of countries, said the minister.

In his address to the meeting, Dr. Jaljoui called for a programme to combat alcohol drinking, along the lines of a programme

for combating smoking and dealing with other social diseases.

He also reviewed the Kingdom's health achievements and its ongoing endeavours to ensure immunisation of women and children against diseases, measures to control tuberculosis and plans to fight smoking.

Jordan, he said, continues to face immense health problems resulting from the return of hundreds of thousands of people from Kuwait. Problems also occur due to the condition of the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

During his stay in Geneva, Dr. Jaljoui held meetings with various delegates and the WHO regional office director to discuss the negative health conditions in Jordan resulting from the Gulf crisis.

He said that the question of setting up a Jerusalem hospital to serve the Palestinian people in the occupied territories was discussed in talks with the chairman of the Arab health ministers council.

## Jordan to attend APU meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is to take part in the coming Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) meeting, due to be held in Libya, to discuss the role of Arab parliaments in enhancing Arab unity and solidarity among Arab states.

The announcement was made following a meeting here Monday between the Libyan Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Baoush and Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Ara-

biyat who discussed the meeting scheduled to open on Saturday, May 25.

The ambassador extended to Dr. Arabiyat an invitation to attend the APU meeting at the head of a Jordanian parliamentary delegation, said the announcement. It said that the Arab parliamentarians were also due to discuss means of concerted Arab efforts and stands in the face of challenges and dangers posed to the Arab Nation.

## Official says factories on Zarqa River comply with water treatment directives

AMMAN (J.T.) — The majority of factories and plants based within the Zarqa River basin have responded favourably to the recent government directives to set up waste water treatment plants or to reactivate the old plants for the purpose of allowing treated water to flow into the Zarqa River heading towards the King Talal Dam, according to the director of laboratories and control of water and the environment department at the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ), Dr. Raja Jadoun.

"The most recent tests conducted on samples of treated water show a good improvement of the treated water coming out of the industrial businesses and factories," Dr. Jadoun said at a press conference in Amman Monday.

On May 10, Minister of Industry and Trade Ziyad Fariz warned Jordanian industries which fail to adhere to the specifications of waste water dumped in the Zarqa River, valleys or canals. He said that the residues and waste posed

a threat to human life and to plants and animals, and increased the pollution of the reservoirs.

The minister gave factories until the end of this month to install and operate plants to ensure that the water flowing from the factories is treated thoroughly.

Dr. Jadoun told the press conference that in light of the directives by the prime minister and Dr. Fariz, inspection teams have been visiting these factories and reporting on their findings.

The Water Authority will continue to collect samples of water for testing, to ensure that the factories abide by the regulations, and monthly reports will be submitted to the government on the findings.

He said that the 14 waste water treatment plants were kept under strict surveillance to ensure that safe water is flowing towards the dams.

Referring to a statement by the minister of water and irrigation about the contamination of the water of King Talal Dam, Dr.

Jadoun said it was a warning the unless proper measures were adopted water would be seriously contaminated and have serious effects on the Jordan Valley farmlands.

Dr. Jadoun reviewed the various measures taken by WAJ to provide protection to the underground water resources, including the closure of all cesspools.

Last week Prime Minister Mudar Badran said that the government would soon start drilling artesian wells along the Zarqa River in order to dilute the polluted water in the dam and feed it fresh underground water, thus making it suitable for irrigation.

This was one of a series of measures which the government plans to take in order to avoid further damage to the crops in the valley.

Earlier, the government formed a committee to look into the real cause of the disaster which was reported to have caused JD 60 million worth of crop damage in the valley.

## Ministers tour Zarqa area, hear citizens' demands

ZARQA (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Mohammad Adoub Al Zaben, Minister of Water and Irrigation Saad Hayel Surour and Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Al Alawneh Monday toured the eastern areas of the Zarqa Governorate.

The ministers started their tour by visiting Al Azraq area, where they met with citizens at Al Azraq Cooperative Society. The ministers were briefed by Al Azraq sub-district director on the people's demands and needs, particularly in the fields of the parcelations of land, water supply and agriculture.

Heads of the municipal councils in north and south Azraq, the president of Al Azraq Cooperative Society and several citizens

who spoke at the meeting called for developing the telecommunications system, establishing a hospital for emergency cases, opening a branch for the Civil Registration Department in the two towns, supporting the fish farming project, establishing a touristic project and spraying swamps in the region with insecticides.

Dr. Zaben said the ministers' visit to the area came within the government's programmes, implemented under directives by His Majesty King Hussein to step up visits to all the country's areas.

Dr. Zaben expressed his ministry's readiness to refer the issue of creating a joint Azraq Municipality to the Cabinet for approval if people in both north and south

Azraq areas approved the idea. He called for setting up a committee, which will comprise the Azraq administrative governor members of municipal councils and charity and cooperative societies, to follow up issues of concern to the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment. He also called for forming another committee, comprising representatives of the ministries of agriculture, water and municipal affairs, to conduct a study on the fish farming project in the south Azraq area.

The ministers also visited Al Halabat village, the Organic Fertilizers Factory and Al Dulail town where they heard demands by citizens and briefed them on the government's plans for their respective areas.

## Iraqi Airways travel agents discuss future plans in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Travel agents working for Iraqi Airways in 36 countries around the world began a two-day meeting in Amman Monday to discuss future strategies in the post-war era, and after Iraqi Airways stopped flying for about eight months due to the aggression on Iraq and the economic embargo imposed on it since last August.

Delegates to the meeting said that reactivating the Iraqi Airways fleet and increasing the national airlines revenues would be on top of the agenda.

The agents will present their views about difficulties encountered in reactivating the Iraqi Airways fleet and will discuss the prospect of employing the aircraft to promote marketing operations and reactivate the tourism industry.

Officials representing the Iraqi authorities have expressed hope that Iraqi Airways flights between Baghdad and Amman

would resume late this week or early next week, regardless of a clearance from the U.N. Sanctions Committee which monitors an international embargo on Iraq.

According to official sources here, the flights between Amman and Baghdad will initially be used for humanitarian purposes, like carrying people who help with the post-war relief efforts and officials who are involved in implementing U.N. resolutions on the Gulf.

Iraqi officials had said that at least two runways of Baghdad international airport were almost back in shape, and elementary ground to air communication facilities were resurrected in preparation for internal flights.

In the absence of air links with Baghdad, due to the strain in relations between Iraq and Iran and Iraq and Turkey, Jordan has become the only entry point into Iraq.

Among those attending the agents' meeting in Amman were Husam Abu Ghazaleh, Royal Jordanian (RJ) director general, and his deputy Majdi Sabri.

Following the opening session, Ismail Khalil, Iraqi Airways deputy director for commercial operations, told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that Amman was chosen as a site for the meeting in a show of appreciation, on the part of Iraq, for the Jordanian stand vis-a-vis the Gulf war.

"The Iraqi Airways have decided that Amman will be the starting point for its first flights after all the airlines' 14 planes have been returned to Baghdad," Mr. Khalil said.

The Iraqi Airways planes, he added, will be used to stimulate the tourism industry following a government decision to set up a special corporation to revive this industry and following another decision allowing Iraqis freedom to travel abroad.

## Jordan to attend Caritas International meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Caritas is taking part in a week-long meeting by Caritas International, to open in Rome on May 23, to discuss Caritas activities around the world, with special focus on the activities conducted by Jordan Caritas in the Middle East.

Jordan Caritas Director Father Mousa Adeli, who is participating in the meetings, said that questions related to Caritas aid to displaced people, the refugees, victims of the Gulf and the Middle East war would be discussed by the participants from 156 Caritas branches around the world.

He said the delegates also planned to discuss poverty, the killing disease AIDS and other problems facing Third World nations at present.

Jordan Caritas had spent millions of dollars in cash and in-kind assistance on the evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait, and on the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates returning here from the Gulf zone in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

## VTC to mark Independence Day

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Labour Ministry's Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) is participating in the Kingdom's celebrations for Independence Day, which falls on May 25, by organising a comprehensive exhibition displaying works by trainees at its centers in various parts of the country.

A VTC official said that the exhibition, which will be held under the patronage of Prime Minister Mudar Badran at the Amman Municipality, on May 27, would display items produced by students under training at the VTC centres' electrical, electronic, mechanical, auto repair, maintenance, refrigeration and air-condition, plumbing and wood work and construction workshops.

The five-day exhibition, the official said, will also display samples of work produced by apprentices and job-seekers who are undergoing training at the VTC centres in order to take the place of non-Jordanian labourers, specially in tailoring, dressmaking, stone and marble cutting, tile production, bakeries and hotel management.

"These are occupations mostly assumed by foreign workers and the VTC has been focusing attention on turning out well trained Jordanians to take over from the non-Jordanian foreign workers," the official added.

The VTC was established in 1976 in order to meet the growing needs of the labour market in Jordan and to train skilled labour for various occupations here and abroad, the official said.

"So far, the VTC has turned out 33,200 trainees who had short, medium and long-term training courses," the official added.

He said that for 1991 the VTC centres are planning to turn out 14,000 trainees who can take over jobs from the non-Jordanian workers, in line with the Labour Ministry's programmes of substituting the foreigners with the local job-seekers.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITION

- ★ Art exhibition by Nazir Ismail at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of etchings, lithographs and monographs, by Ahmad Nawash and Yasser Dawik at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (10 a.m. — 5 p.m.)

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Safarini appointed Torino consul

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal decree has been issued, endorsing the appointment of Mr. Mustafa Safarini as Jordan's honorary consul in the Italian city of Torino.

#### Badran congratulates French premier

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran Monday sent a cable to the newly-appointed French Prime Minister Edith Cresson congratulating her on forming the French cabinet. Mr. Badran expressed hope that existing relations between Jordan and France would be further enhanced.

#### French Arabist to deliver lecture

AMMAN (J.T.) — In cooperation with the French Centre for Studies and Research on the contemporary Middle East, Dr. Luc Barbusco will Sunday, 26 May, deliver a lecture in Arabic on aspects of literary criticism. Mr. Luc is a doctor of political sciences who wrote many articles and published many studies on the contemporary Arab World. He also translated into French some of the works of Arab writers, including Edward Kharrat, Youssef Idrees, Nabil Naoum and Elias Khouri.



# Jordan Times

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Established 1977

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## Not a taxing review

PRIOR TO the Gulf crisis, Jordan was on its way to economic recovery after making a series of adjustments in its fiscal and economic policies and introducing overdue reforms in them. Then the Kuwaiti issue erupted sweeping with it all hope to reverse quickly the country's economic and fiscal woes. Suddenly the economy of Jordan once again dipped to all times low and for a while the Kingdom seemed heading for economic disaster. Fortunately, however, the Jordanian economy proved once again that it is resilient and robust enough to stand the challenge. Now that the Gulf war is behind us, there is a renewed determination to forge new economic and fiscal policies that promise to push the nation's economy out of the existing stagnation and lead it once again to recovery and prosperity.

No doubt part and parcel of plans being contemplated to uplift the economy is the taxation policy that the government is invited to review and reconsider in the light of the experiences of the successful industrial nations of the world. There is no way to generate business and commerce and even industrialisation in the country without an enlightened taxation policy that aims not only to create employment opportunities but also energise the wheels of industry and trade in the country. The most effective taxation policy that Amman may envisage is the one that aims to collect revenues right and left with no due consideration to the negative side effects of such immediate goals on the overall economy. What is urgently needed, instead, is a more liberal and open taxation policy with a vision and a perspective that can promote business, encourage industrialisation and generate new employment opportunities. Such broad objectives cannot be realised without a taxation policy that encourages expenditures by Jordanian businesses and individuals on matters such as advertising, public relation activities, research, promotional campaigns and even travel. Only by making such expenditures and other related expenses tax deductible on the most liberal terms and conditions, can the state hope to create additional opportunities for earning additional tax revenues. The wheels of Jordanian economy in all its aspects and dimensions need to be reenergised through a visionary tax system. Now is the time to do just that.

In this vein, one could suggest the establishment of a high blue ribbon commission comprised of all sectors of Jordanian business activities with a view to reviewing the existing taxation policy in Jordan and submit recommendations on rectifying its existing stifling features. There is no country under the sun that succeeded in modernising its economy and forged ahead with its economic planning without an equally modern and progressive taxation policy as a basis for such ambitious planning. The proposed commission would be entrusted to accomplish just that objective by balancing conflicting criteria in a harmonious formula. Now is the time to create such a body since time is opportune to reconstruct the Jordanian economy on new foundations appropriate to the demands of the nineties and beyond.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ISRAEL'S arrogance and rejection of the international community's will cannot last for long should the United States decide that the Middle East must also come under the international legitimacy and enjoy peace and stability, said Al Rai Arabic daily Monday. There is only one international legitimacy which the Zionist enemy continues to reject, unless the U.S. Council resolutions are implemented, the paper noted. Only the United States holds the authority over questions related to security, justice and peace; and it can put an end to the sufferings of people in this region regardless of Shamir's continued rejections and his settlement policies in Arab land, the paper stressed. It said that the world realises that the Soviet Union and the other European nations can play a role in ending the Arab-Israeli conflict, but everyone realises that the meaningful role in this matter can be played only by the United States which ought to impose its will and that of the world community on Shamir and his government. The paper said that holding on to other countries' lands can by no means achieve peace; and the United States ought to force the Jewish state to renounce aggression and become a useful member of the world community not a source of danger to mankind. The paper urged Washington to work towards safeguarding America's credibility as a superpower which supports the causes of justice, human dignity and security.

Sawt Al Shabab daily commented on King Hussein's visit to Damascus and described it as the beginning of wide scale contacts on the part of Jordan to unify Arab ranks in the face of the ongoing efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. We believe that the Egyptian president's visit to Damascus and the visit by PLO official Farouk Al Qaddumi to Amman fall within the framework of concerted Arab endeavours to reach the aspired unified stand, said the daily. The King's efforts to convene a meeting by the Arab countries directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict are timely and come at a moment when the Arab people of Palestine are confronting a war of genocide at the hands of the Zionist authorities. The paper said that the King's visit to Damascus and his talks with the Syrian president served as another gesture by the monarch to warn the Arabs of the need of a unified stand to confront Israel's manoeuvres on the one hand and to be ready for any peace plans on the other. It said it was high time for the U.S. administration to listen to one Arab voice and to see a united Arab stand and it is time for the Arabs to confront the Israeli intransigence with one united effort and abort the Jewish state's expansionist designs.

## The View from Fourth Circle

# Militarisation and pauperisation of the Arab World

By Rami G. Khouri

WHILE the Middle East still calculates the true human and political costs of the recent Gulf war, first estimates are providing a gruesome picture of the ultimate financial cost of the crisis to the Arabs. The calculations, and the political reality they represent, provide sobering food for thought about the total dimensions of the Gulf conflict.

Those of us who take a historical view of events and who believe in the national integrity of the Arab people have long argued that one of the main reasons for Arab failure, collapse and humiliation has been the exploitation of this region's natural and financial resources by the predominantly western superpowers of this world. The total financial cost of the Gulf conflict supports the contention that the war should be properly analysed within the perspective of the scramble for resources between the affluent north and the poor south. Within this context, massive military sales to the Middle East play a prominent role in transferring wealth from the poor to the rich.

While complete figures will not be clear for a while yet, initial estimates place the financial cost of the Gulf crisis at around \$400 billion. This includes the cost of the nearly seven-month-long confrontation, the 40-day war, lost business and family incomes during the crisis, and the cost of reconstructing war damage in Kuwait, Iraq and neighbouring countries. If the additional anticipated costs of establishing new "security" systems in the region are added to the equation, the ultimate real cost of the conflict could easily top \$500 billion. This compares to total gross domestic product of all the Arab countries of \$375 billion in 1988.

Not only will the Arabs spend most of this \$500 billion price tag on rebuilding infrastructural and oil installations which they had already paid for once. This money will also deprive the Arab countries of investments in water, agriculture, productive industries and needed social services, and the bulk of it will flow back to the industrialised western countries in the form of arms and industrial contracts.

Such a massive net transfer of resources out of the Arab World will further pauperise a Middle East region which finds itself at the tail end of a seven-year-old regional recession which has seen per capita incomes in most Arab countries fall steadily in real terms since 1983. Most of the Arab countries, especially those in the Gulf, are buying poverty and perpetual dependence on the western powers.

To make matters even worse, the heightened political insecurity and instability of the region will usher in a renewed period of long-term capital flight, as Arab private savings and government funds gravitate to safer deposits and investments in the industrialised countries. An estimated \$25 billion in capital flight took place during the recent crisis, and I doubt any of it has trickled back yet. In the next few years, the governments of several Arab oil-producing states will find themselves transformed instantly from net creditors to net borrowers.

The Saudi Arabian government, burdened by war commitments of some \$65 billion, has already borrowed around \$3.5 billion from international banks, and has given Saudi Arabian public sector corporations the green light to tap the world credit markets. Saudi Arabia's state budget deficit was projected at \$6.6 billion last year, but because of war-related spending it ballooned to over \$15 billion, and is expected to nearly double again this year.

This transformation of the region into a wholesale debtor comes at a particularly trying moment, when new international creditworthiness and capital adequacy rules established by the Basel-based Bank for International Settlements will make lending by international banks to Arab parties more difficult, and more expensive for the borrowing countries or corporations.

Massive spending on armaments in recent years is a major cause of the Arab World's economic problems today. The Middle East is the world's most militaristic region, leading the world tables in several categories. Recent American, British and IMF studies point out the leading role that arms purchases play in bringing the Arab World to a state of financial vulnerability. During the last decade, when the Arab World was widely perceived to be a rich region, total Arab foreign debt increased from around \$20 billion to over \$200 billion, much of it to buy arms.

**We think that the Arab World is an astounding cash cow — the West milks us for our oil and natural resources, pays us in cash, and then milks us again by taking that cash in return for selling us arms and other things that have not helped bring Arab stability, national identity or deep and balanced economic progress.**

During the period 1978 and 1988, total Arab arms purchases from abroad were worth some \$220 billion (in constant 1988 dollars), most of which were imported from the leading industrialised countries. The leading arms buyers were Iraq (\$66 billion), Saudi Arabia (\$40 billion), Syria (\$29 billion), Libya (\$23 billion) and Egypt (\$14 billion). Total Arab arms imports averaged 16.6 per cent of total Arab imports, the highest ratio in the world (followed by South Asia at 11.3 per cent Africa at 8.8 per cent and Latin America at 3.8 per cent).

In the 1975-88 period, total Arab military expenditures averaged 11 per cent of total Arab gross national product (GNP), compared to 5.7 per cent for the United States, 3.4 per cent for India, 2.5 per cent for Spain and less than 1 per cent for Mexico. Security and defence spending consistently accounts for an average of 25 per cent of Arab central government spending, reaching 55 per cent in Syria and Oman, 42 per cent in the UAE, and 33 per cent in Bahrain, Libya and Qatar. By the mid-1980s, Arab countries accounted for nine of the world's top 13 countries in terms of military spending relative to GNP.

Recent IMF and International Institute of Strategic Studies (London) figures also show that the Arab states have the world's highest absolute military expenditures, ranging from Iraq's \$28.60 spent on defence from every \$100 of government earnings, followed by Oman (\$19.50), Saudi Arabia (\$18.19), and Syria (\$11.21).

Arab countries also have the world's highest ratio of soldiers to total population, with an average of 15 soldiers per 1,000 population during the period 1978-88 (the highest being Iraq at 38, and Syria at 34 soldiers per thousand population). The pan-Arab average of 15 soldiers per 1,000 population compares to 11.6 in Europe, 8.7 in North America and 5.2 in East Asia. Clearly, something is wrong in an Arab World which spends more on militarism than any other part of the world, yet is unable to enjoy stability and peace. Is our military spending really geared to assuring our security? Or is it simply one of the more successful means by which the post-colonial, post-WWII Arab World has been exploited by the western powers as a profitable source of money?

What should we think when we see that in the past 15 years the Arabs have spent some \$650 billion on defence and security, they recently financed most of the war costs in the Gulf, they shall have spent a total of some \$400-\$500 billion on the war and its aftermath — and almost all of this money, in one way or another, finds its way back to western banks, investments, industrial and service contracts, food sales, and arms deals?

This is, of course, a white man's game, a monopoly of the north. When the Egyptians, in their deep national perplexity, thought they were Texans and offered to rent their army to protect the Gulf states, they thought they had hit the jackpot. They danced all the way to Haifa Al Batin, their hips and their honour swaying wildly in the warm breeze of the Gulf. But it proved an ill wind. The money was a mirage. The Arab big spenders wanted to import their protectors, like their cars and air conditioners, from the North Atlantic. This was a game devised by the West, to profit the West. Arab pretenders who thought they could muscle in on the money were to be disappointed, if not humiliated.

The western powers wanted Arab cover to drum up a fake "coalition," to make their armada of the 1990s look like a respectable international effort. It was no such thing. Morocco, discovered the real world during the Gulf crisis, when hundreds of thousands of Moroccans defied their leader, with street marches and suddenly Morocco's participation in the coalition went limp. Egypt learned its lesson earlier this month, when it withdrew its forces from the Gulf because it learned that in the world of the American Central Command, there is no place for Egyptians or Arabs. Others in the area will learn the truth, including Turkey and Syria, and the truth will hurt them. Superpowers do not make "coalitions" with smaller countries of poor, dark-skinned, Muslim peoples. They play games with them. They use them, make money out of them, and discard them when they no longer need them. The \$400-\$500 billion cost of the Gulf war is already flowing back to the American Treasury department and to private companies in England and the United States, and it will flow for many years.

For the West, this is a very profitable game. It's no wonder that the British were the first to draw up the rules of the game when they mapped out the post-colonial order in this region after World War One — and that British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd was one of the first western officials into the Gulf in the wake of the war to drum up new business. The amazing thing is that many Arab countries still play the game. But for how long? At what cost in Arab lives, dignity and self-respect?

# Blaming others for self-inflicted ills

By George Shadroui

CAIRO — It is time Arabs stopped bemoaning imperialism and Israeli conspiracies and, as the American singer Michael Jackson might say, take a hard look at the man in the mirror.

What would they see? For starters: A dictatorship still alive and well in Iraq. CNN is no longer broadcasting on my television these days, but I will assume that Palestinians, Jordanians and Sudanese are not cheering the deaths of 1,000 Kurds a day.

A rising tide of extremism and intolerance, perhaps to be expected during times of war — but only if one accepts that Saddam Hussein was someone on whose behalf energy and even life should be expended.

Corruption epitomised, perhaps, by the Emir in Kuwait, who initially seemed more worried about his gold-plated bathroom fixtures than about the internal problems in his devastated country.

An economic disaster in the making from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf. Though Arabs barely trade with one another, you will find elites spending fortunes in Europe, investing billions in the United States and lounging in five-star hotels and expensive London restaurants in an empty attempt to be "stylish."

Rigid class structures, the systematic repression of women, stifling bureaucracies and an unwillingness among many citizens

to embrace manual labour as a healthy and worthy pursuit for rich and poor alike.

A Sudanese government is shambles, a Lebanese government dominated by Syria, a Syrian government without a spark of democracy, an Algerian government on the verge of fundamentalist retrogression, a Jordanian people embracing extremism, a Palestinian movement betraying its highest ideals.

Why go on? Those who seek to blame the West and Israel for all of this have either lost touch with reality or hope to further mislead the Arab masses in order to protect their own interest in the status quo. Even if it were true that this all stems from a grand conspiracy (and it isn't), one would have to wonder how it is that Arab leaders cannot but step into the mine fields laid by their adversaries.

Perhaps the time has come for free elections and change of the sort witnessed recently in Eastern Europe. The post-Gulf war situation is not unlike that which faced the Arab World after the 1967 war, when Arab leaders and intellectuals all over the world asked a terrifying question: What ails us? All kinds of theories were formulated — the failure of Islam, the failure to embrace Islam, a Western conspiracy against the Arabs, an inability to modernise, the second class political status of women. One scholar went so far as to cite the toilet training of children.

But no one more accurately or eloquently summed up the problem than Cecil Hourani, in an essay entitled "The Moment of Truth." Hourani placed the blame for the Arab World's dilemma right where it belonged — on the Arabs and their psychological obsession with Israel.

I do not mean to suggest that Israel is not responsible for some of the problems in the region. Israel and its proponents have destroyed hundreds of Palestinian villages and thousands of homes; they have perpetrated acts of terrorism and systematically violated the human rights of many Arabs; their invasion of Lebanon was essentially unprovoked and led to the massacre of thousands of people. But, at the risk of blaming the victim, it is nevertheless fair to speculate — as Hourani did — on why the Arabs have allowed themselves to be constantly put in a position where their victimisation becomes a matter of course.

For example, one would think that war as a credible weapon against Israel or the West had been discredited, if only because of the realities of power. And yet, Arab states continue to devote tremendous resources to war, supposedly in the name of containing Israel, though the main victims wind up being Kuwaitis, Kurds, Palestinians, fundamentalists, leftists and Shia, many of whom have had the temerity to challenge a ruling regime.

Almost without exception, every war has either left Israel

stronger than before or left the Arabs as a whole weaker, except, ironically, the one war in which Israel never faced an army fielded by an Arab state — the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

The intifada had just started to reshape the dynamics of the situation in the occupied territories when Saddam screamed "war," and half the Arab World and the majority of Palestinians stood up, saluted and committed political and military suicide. Millions of Arabs who once embraced Nasser, who at least had a legitimate vision, turned to Saddam Hussein, whose great accomplishment to date include the destruction of three Middle East countries, the deaths of perhaps a million people and the near devastation of the regional economy and environment.

Had the Arabs followed Hourani's advice, they would have spent the past 20 years playing to their inherent strengths — fostering regional economic development; letting demographic realities take their course; applying international pressure and allowing pluralism and tolerance to take root in their own homelands.

"The most immediate and urgent problems which face nearly all the Arab countries are those involved with establishing the minimum conditions on which a modern society may eventually be built," Hourani wrote. "We have vast territories, enormous natural resources, and vital strategic positions... What we cannot afford is to have no policy at all to be able to support the conditions of war, and incapable of profiting from the advantages of peace."

It is not too late for Arab society to escape this cycle of self-destruction and set itself on a tough, but realistic course.

A few ideas:

The Kuwaitis and Saudis, not to mention elites throughout the region, could do something constructive by pouring money into useful projects and institutions rather than meaningless consumer goods and a decadent lifestyle. For example, during the 1980s there was a great deal of discussion about building desalination plants in order to meet the water demands in the Levant.

Desalination plants, paid for by the United States, Japan and the Gulf states (after they repair damage to their own region), could eliminate an explosive issue and address a basic need in the area. What does it matter if Israelis benefit? Why should Arabs go thirsty while Israelis siphon off their water, which is the scenario unfolding? solve the problem for everyone and you solve the problem.

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Desalination plants, paid for by the United States, Japan and the Gulf states (after they repair damage to their own region), could eliminate an explosive issue and address a basic need in the area. What does it matter if Israelis benefit? Why should Arabs go thirsty while Israelis siphon off their water, which is the scenario unfolding? solve the problem for everyone and you solve the problem.

The Arab League could do something bold for a change by setting up an investment fund to which countries in the region and around the world contribute. The fund would be used to develop stronger democratic institutions and economies. Grants would be tied to concrete advancements in human rights and democratisation.

Arab intellectuals from throughout the region could hold a conference at which they formulate their own ideas on how to rebuild the Arab Nation and end the state of conflict. They could start by collectively advocating a free press and denouncing torture, tyranny and anti-democratic measures by any and all who practice them.

The Arab states must recognise Israel's right to exist and extend to Israel the hand of peace. This is the strongest diplomatic card the Arabs have and use time to play it is now, while the world is sincerely committed to ending the Arab-Israeli conflict. I suspect much of the world, already annoyed with Israeli intransigence, would move behind the Arabs in a concerted effort to push Israel into a more flexible stance.

Hourani's basic concern lingers: Is the need to humble Israel more important to Arabs than their own economic and political health? If the answer is yes, then Arabs will continue to be the victims of dictators whose only claim to legitimacy is a desire to wage war (and doing it badly at that) and others who seek to exploit the region rather than promote its independence and prosperity.

Not even the injustices done to the Palestinians warrant endless warfare at the expense of 200 million people from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans. And, it could be convincingly argued, the Palestinians themselves would have benefited far more had they chosen an aggressive but nonviolent course in their quest for self-determination and a homeland. There is no guarantee, in the end, that Israel will choose peace over land. The Arabs cannot — however just their claims — force the United Nations or the world powers to usher in a Palestinian state. They cannot force Israel to return the occupied territories to its owners. But the Arab World need not, as it struggles with the diplomatic and political realities of the day, languish in a state of backwardness, corruption and tyranny.

As Hourani wrote: "The fate and the peace of the Near East should not be left to the initiative of Israel alone. Even if Israel opts for a closed, exclusive type of society, and rejects the Arabs as fellow-citizens, we should not do the same... For in their hearts they know that a closed, exclusive, fanatic Israel can never co-exist with an open, liberal, tolerant Arab society... Our greatest victory will be the day when the Jews in Palestine will prefer to live in an Arab society rather than in an Israeli one. It is up to us to make that possible."

George Shadroui is the managing editor of the Middle East Times-Egypt Edition, from which this article is reprinted.

## LETTERS

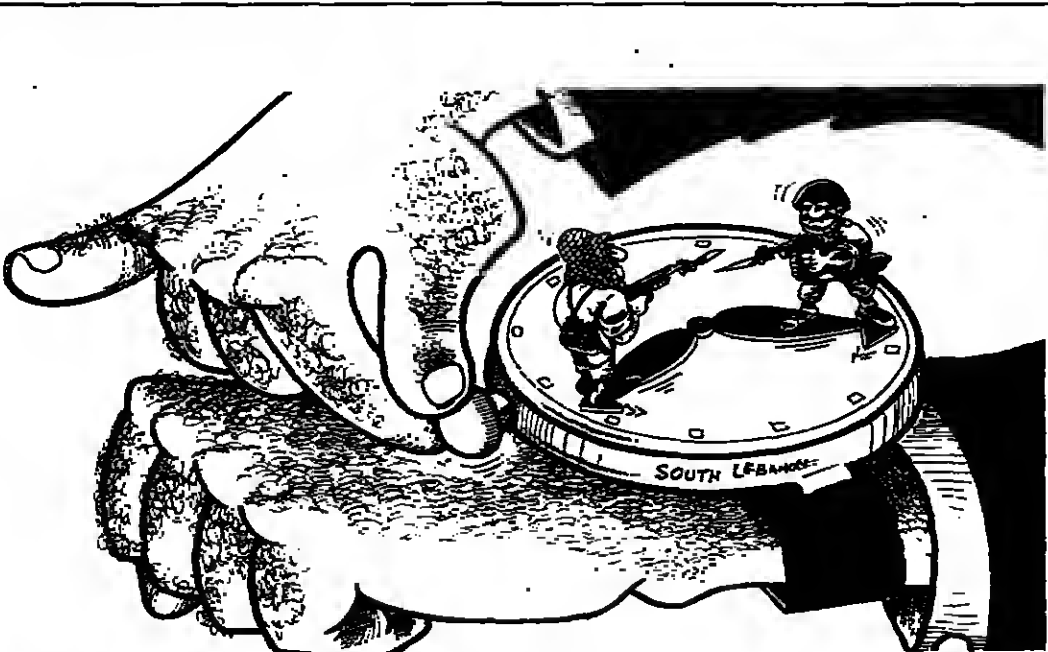
### Where is the local input?

To The Editor

I RECENTLY returned from abroad. I opened the May 16 Weekender expectantly because I was looking forward to reading E. Yaghi's column. It wasn't there. I hope that does not mean that it is no longer part of your paper. It has been a weekly item for a long time now, and I enjoy having local input in the paper. You used to have a column called "Focus" by Mariam Shabin that I also looked forward to with pleasure, but that has been gone for a long time. Nermeen Murad had a column called "Diary" that was always fun to read, but that is gone too.

I like the Weekender. There is often good material from the international press offered. Sometimes it is of interest to me and sometimes not, but there is always something I am glad that I have read. More local input would enrich it. E. Yaghi's column is local, fresh, and interesting. I do not always agree with it, but that is part of the value. It is stimulating to have a chance to see things from another point of view, and it is well and sensitively written.

Barbara Yates  
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Amman.



M. Kahil



## Portugal supports U.S.-led efforts

(Continued from page 1)

the Middle East and noted that as Portugal is a European Community member it can only support the collective decisions which were passed by the community over the past years. He said that his country would give impetus to all efforts designed to bring about peace.

"We feel that there is an opportunity now to push the peace process forward, and we have to provide more effort to reach not only the ending of the conflict but to reach a comprehensive peace in the region," he said.

Europe has sought a role in the proposed peace conference, a position supported by Arab states and the Palestinians, who want the talks to have as much international involvement as possible. Israel has maintained that U.S. and Soviet backing for the conference is sufficient.

Mr. Denis Pinheiro visited Syria on Sunday and met with President Hafez Al Assad and Minister of State Nasser Kaddour. They discussed the Middle East peace efforts and relations between Syria and the EC.

In a departure statement, the Portuguese minister said:

"My objectives were to discuss with the Jordanian authorities the current situation in the Middle East plus the relation between the EC and the region, and, 'this particular case, with Jordan, taking into account recent developments, but essentially future prospects. And I could benefit from listening to my colleague and to His Majesty because a very good picture was given to

me, a very clear one on the main issues which ought to be addressed now and ought to be considered in the future."

On Portugal's stand on Israel's refusal to accept the participation of the EC in a peace conference, he said: "My impression is that Israel will accept full participation of the EC. I am persuaded of that."

Mr. Masri said: "Portugal will become member of the European Troika as of July and thus will have an important role to play. It will also become chairman of the EC as of next January. Therefore the minister's visit to Jordan was not only because Portugal is part of Europe, but also because it will have a leading position in Europe in the coming year."

"As the Portuguese minister said, Portugal is a small country which is far from the region. It does not have close relations with us, but it started showing various interests. These interests will be crystallised bilaterally with the countries of the region."

"The Portuguese minister wanted to know Jordan's views concerning the Palestinian issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the current peace efforts. He will also be acquainted with the stands of the countries which he already visited or will visit to have the full picture of what is going on when Portugal joins the EC. So the visiting official's talks here concentrates on Jordan's views, the peace process, coordination among Arab states on the peace process... all of these were the issues the Portuguese minister discussed in his meeting with His Majesty King Hussein and with me later."

## Barzani is 'very satisfied'

(Continued from page 1)

They were deployed by the United Nations Sunday to try to create a climate of calm to encourage refugees to come back.

The group is the vanguard of 400 to 500 U.N. security men to be stationed throughout Iraq as a confidence-building measure.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported that a mass demonstration took place in the Dohuk region Sunday in protest against the foreign presence in the area.

American and allied troops created their "safe haven" for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq

without Baghdad's consent. The U.N. guards who arrived Sunday came by agreement with the government.

"The demonstrators declared they supported President Saddam Hussein and stood behind his leadership to maintain Iraq's dignity and pride," said the INA report.

It said the protest was held in Dohuk governorate but did not say where. The province has an area of 8,800 square kilometres much of it now under Western control.

INA said part of the demonstration was shown on Baghdad Television.

## U.N. sets up damages fund

(Continued from page 1)

Netherlands, are other candidates.

Sanctions were imposed against Iraq on Aug. 6, four days after its invasion of Kuwait. But under

terms of an April 3 Security Council resolution they are to be partially lifted once Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction are scrapped and a compensation fund is set up.

## Lahd unhappy with treaty

(Continued from page 1)

Major-General Lahd told a news conference at his command headquarters in the South Lebanon town of Marjayoun that signing the treaty would be a "disaster" that "will make Lebanon a Syrian satellite and would gradually lead to Lebanon's extinction."

His remarks were broadcast by his Voice of the South radio station.

Gen. Lahd commands the South Lebanon Army (SLA), a 3,000-men militia equipped and funded by Israel. The SLA and about 1,000 Israeli troops jointly patrol an enclave, which Israel has continued to occupy in South Lebanon since it withdrew from land further north in 1985.

Israel regards the "security zone" as a buffer against guerrilla raids.

Gen. Lahd said ratification of the treaty "will also mean that there will be no implementation of U.N. resolution 427" — a 1978 Security Council measure calling for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from South Lebanon.

"The treaty sets the ground, for Syria to annex Lebanon," Gen. Lahd said. "We cannot allow that and cannot consequently ask Israel to withdraw from South Lebanon."

Syria has been the main power broker in Lebanon since it deployed 40,000 troops here under a 1976 Arab League peacekeeping mandate. Its troops patrol half of Lebanon's territory.

It has pressured the country's militias to surrender their arms to the government in line with the new peace plan, which has so far allowed the army to extend its control over one-quarter of the country.

President Hrawi's government on Wednesday approved the draft treaty, which provides for cooperation in political, security, economy, culture and foreign affairs.

The Syrian cabinet approved the draft treaty Saturday.

Reports in the Beirut press said Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Assad were due to sign it at a summit conference in Damascus within the next two days.

It will be the first such treaty between the two countries since their independence from France in the 1940s.

## Yemenis divided over Gulf crisis policy

By Mariam Isa Reuter

SANAA — Yemeni officials say they have no regrets over Sanaa's pro-Iraq stance that ended vital financial aid from neighbouring Gulf Arab states and led to the expulsion of nearly a million Yemeni expatriates.

But some people in the poorest state in the Arabian peninsula are publicly criticising the government. They say its Gulf policies had worsened the severe economic crisis in Yemen, which celebrates its first anniversary of unity between north and south on Wednesday.

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani said Saudi Arabia and its allies in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Sanaa's main financial donors — were punishing Yemen for what he described as its neutral stand in the crisis.

He said the GCC states were refusing to open a dialogue with

Yemen, while talks had never stopped with the United States, which led the military coalition that evicted Iraq from Kuwait last February.

"Had we known 20 years ago that this money would be used towards the end (as) they (GCC) had in mind, I would, personally, wish Yemen had never taken it," he told Reuters in an interview.

"Had they accepted Yemen to be neutral we would never have suffered a single problem. But they wanted us to come with them to the front line and kill or be killed — they wanted us to join the allied coalition against Iraq," he said.

Yemen, at the time the only Arab member of the U.N. Security Council, condemned Iraq's conquest of Kuwait last August 2 but voted against a resolution authorising the use of force against Baghdad.

Iryani said Sanaa had abstained from voting on other U.N. resolutions against Iraq only be-

cause they created a "total bias" for the United States and its allies.

"Today we don't regret any resolution to which we said no or to which we said yes. Yemen was convinced, rightly or wrongly, that Iraq could be made, not persuaded, to withdraw from Kuwait without war," he said.

Sanaa has respected a U.N. trade embargo against Iraq but western diplomats say it had little choice.

Critics and opposition leaders have urged the government to mend fences with the Gulf Arab states, saying that Yemen, an impoverished state of 11 million people, was the main loser.

But Iryani said such a step was impossible because some GCC states — Oman being a notable exception — had closed the door to dialogue during the crisis.

He said Yemen was now hawking on "absolutely good terms" with Egypt and Syria, Arab members of the anti-Iraq alliance.

Relations were also good with

European nations and Sanaa was "mending fences" with the United States because the dialogue between the two countries had never been interrupted, he said.

"There is a tremendous difference between coming to someone who refused a dialogue with you a few months ago and someone who was in dispute with you but kept the dialogue open," Iryani said.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

Tens of thousands of Yemenis took to the streets during the crisis, denouncing U.S. President George Bush and calling King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak as U.S. agents.

The critics say this was the final straw for GCC members — Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

"I think what really upset ev-

erybody was the demonstrations... we gave nothing materially to Iraq," Mohammad Abulaboum, parliament member from former north Yemen and chairman of the body's economic committee told Reuters.

"The way we presented ourselves was very bad — there were demonstrations with bad caricatures of heads of state, we threw stones at embassies," said Abdul Rahman Al Jifri, a southern Yemeni who heads the League of Sons of Yemen, an opposition party.

"The demonstrations were directed by the T.V. and government staff had permission to go. We could have done nothing," he said.

"Yemen should have adopted a policy which protected the interests of its citizens... and Yemeni immigrants in the Gulf area," said opposition leader Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein al Ahmar, head of the powerful Hashid tribal confederation in northern Yemen on the Saudi

border. Up to a million Yemenis, mainly from Saudi Arabia, returned home penniless after the oil-rich kingdom withdrew special residence and work privileges for Yemenis last October.

Officials say the exodus doubled Yemen's unemployment rate to 30 per cent and the subsequent loss of expatriate remittances dried up its main source of foreign currency.

Mr. Iryani estimated Yemen's total losses from the Gulf crisis at \$6 billion. These included Yemeni property abandoned in Saudi Arabia, he said.

He said Yemen was close to settling a long-running border dispute with Oman, a GCC member which often mediates for the group and took a softer line towards Iraq in the crisis.

"We both agreed to put the crisis behind us and we almost have a date to get together. Definitely we will resolve our border dispute," he said.

## Hundreds of cholera cases in Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

carried into the country by people returning from the Hajj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

He described the latest outbreak as an epidemic and said authorities believed "it is imported from Turkey and Iran because of the population movement."

Talal Ibrahim Allo, the director of Qadisiyah hospital, said he had no problem treating cholera. A shortage of drugs because of U.N. sanctions against Iraq had been resolved since foreign medical aid began arriving in mid-April, he added.

Two cholera patients at the hospital on Monday, a brother and sister aged five and seven, contracted the disease eating unwashed apples, according to their mother.

Qadisiyah hospital serves Saddam City, a run-down district of

one million Shiites named after President Saddam Hussein on the outskirts of Baghdad. Sanitation in the area has traditionally been poor.

Mr. Murzi has changed his view of the cholera threat since 10 days ago, when he said he was not too worried about the danger of the disease spreading with the onset of summer heat. He said his assessment now "changed daily."

Iraq has restored some electricity and water supplies since the Gulf war air attacks on power stations paralysed generating capacity.

But Mr. Murzi said the limited amount of electricity available was now being spread more thinly, as more towns and cities were reconnected to the national grid.

He said Health Ministry officials told him on Monday that no sewage processing plants were working in Iraq because they consumed so much electricity.

## Palestinians mark massacre

(Continued from page 1)

100's of Bekaa Valley to protest their expulsions from the Gaza Strip, the relief agency said Monday.

The four, accused of anti-Israeli violence, were expelled Saturday. They spent the night at the headquarters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and then requested a move to the Red Cross office.

On Sunday, they held a sit-in and appealed to international organisations to help stop Israeli repression in the occupied territories, an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) official in Beirut said.

The four men, all from the Gaza Strip, are Jamal Abu Habel, 43, Muhsin Msalam, 31, Hashem Ali Dahlan, 31, and Jamal Abu Jadyan, 33.

## Iraq lodges complaint at U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

their country, bringing the total number of refugees who have left the province to 100,000.

More than 1.1 million Iraqis fled to Iran after the army crushed Kurdish and Shiite Muslim rebellions in northern and southern Iraq.

The refugees began returning three weeks ago after Western forces set up safe havens zone for Kurds in northern Iraq and Kurdish rebel chiefs reported progress in autonomy talks with the government in Baghdad.

Ikka Uusitalo, representative of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in

Tehran, told a news conference in Geneva Friday that between 8,000 and 10,000 refugees were returning from Iran each day and the population in Iranian refugee camps had dropped to 850,000.

IRNA said another 100,000 refugees in Bakhtaran had applied to return but a shortage of vehicles to drive them to the border from refugee camps slowed down their movement.

Bakhtaran, bordering Iraqi Kurdistan, was at one point host to more than 400,000 Iraqi refugees.

IRNA quoted a province health official as saying 796 refugee babies had been born in Bakhtaran hospitals.

## BBC world service television is coming

It is 1990 GMT. You can hear the Lilliburlero theme that introduces every BBC World Service radio news bulletin on the hour. But this version, slightly different, heralds BBC World Service Television. A satellite channel that aims to become, like its radio counterpart, a true world service. Vicky Payne from the BBC went to find out more.

IT IS the evening news. But no one living in Britain will see it. This bulletin on BBC World Service Television (WSTV) is unique because it has been specially compiled for an international audience, not a domestic one. In fact, just as is the case on World Service radio, a British story might not be included at all unless the editorial team believes it warrants coverage within a worldwide context.

The idea for WSTV was first seriously mooted six years ago. Last December the project got the go-ahead. It is funded by money from BBC Enterprises, which is the commercial arm of the BBC.

The channel is on air 18 hours a day (12 at weekends) and the schedulers are in the enviable position of being able to fill these hours with the cream of the BBC's output: drama, situation comedies, soap operas, documentaries, and current affairs and nature programmes to name but a few. There are also regular slots from BBC English, the language-teaching section from World Service radio. Much of this will have subtitles to help viewers for whom English is a second language.

At present, the service is being carried on the Intelsat V1 satellite. Nearly a million households are receiving it, mainly via cable networks in Europe.

The formula for WSTV is one that the sales team believe will prove more than attractive to would-be buyers. Jeff Hazell, director of sales and distribution, is saying to the cable companies that "you cannot run a serious cable network without World Service Television."

The new schedule, he continues, is so far-ranging and attractive that it has already encouraged a swift and enthusiastic response from viewers.

The news, as with its radio counterpart on World Service, is a key ingredient of the new output. Put together by a team that was headquartered from Bush House (home of BBC World Service), and from BBC Televi-

sion Centre, the news is set to combine the best of the World's Services editorial perspective on international stories with the television service's production technical expertise.

World Service Television news is made especially for an international audience. It is not a watered down version of a domestic bulletin. The team can draw on the immense resources of the BBC's newsgathering services — the biggest in the world — and call on some 45 correspondents based in, over 30 countries. This gives it the edge over competitors like the American-owned CNN.

Editor John Ramsland, a senior Bush House newsmen, knows his audience. Within 12 weeks of getting the go-ahead, he had built his team, not to mention a newsroom from which to operate, chosen his presenters and started to produce the first programmes.

Ramsland's brief was to create for television what World Service had done so successfully for radio: the news programme would be story-led regardless of whether there were pictures to go with it or not.

Ramsland is quick to point out that since they started in March, "there has not been one occasion when we could not lead with the story we wanted. If there is a problem with pictures, there are ways around it: graphics, library footage and good commentators."

The news team also commissions material especially for its bulletins. Ramsland dispatched Baghdad correspondent Jim Fish to Croatia in Yugoslavia to report on the complex situation there. "We wanted someone to stand back and explain the basic players. We ran his two reports over a weekend. The pictures were beautiful."

He chooses his words with care. The team is conscious that in a bulletin of 30 minutes, many, if not most, of the stories are going to be concerned with the tribulations of humankind. "It is important not to have a sledgehammer approach. Something



WSTV news presenter Chritabel King

like Jim Fish's piece gave up stunning pictures which nevertheless put over a serious message — placed properly within a bulletin it worked well."

However vital to the image and important to the schedules, the news is nonetheless only one small part of World Service Television's output.

Chief executive Chris Irwin (a Bush House man and steeped in World Service tradition), knows that launching in Europe means dealing with the hardest market first. Once they crack Europe, he argues, the rest of the world will follow and the pick-up rate for the service will be high. By 1993, he reckons, World Service Television will be beaming down into all five continents.

Irwin speaks and thinks fast. He does not brook much criticism and has neither the time nor the money to pussyfoot around with a will-it-work-it-won't-work philosophy. He subscribes to the view that the more satellite channels there are, the more people are inclined to acquire the equipment.

In Hugo Williams, his director of programming, he has an experienced (satellite, domestic BBC) TV man who has always had an instinctive gut reaction to what does and does not attract viewers.

The team believes that the task ahead has already been made considerably easier by the reputation built up through nearly six decades of World Service broadcasting and three of BBC television. But we are still pioneering, points out Irwin with relish.

"We are, as far as I can work out, the first commercially-financed, mixed-programme, English language international satellite channel with global aspirations."

Irwin is, for instance, pleased with the new global weather ser-

vice. Aside from its practical and informative side, it picks up on the lead weather stories of the day. The specially commissioned business news also takes a similar global view of the subject.

The team may be confident, but it is not blasé. Irwin believed his first task was to get World Service Television up and running.

"Get on the air and then start to refine, that was my thinking," he says. "I could have made a terrible mistake but I don't think so. The next stage is to start selling. You only get one chance to sell, if you go too early into the market and someone doesn't like you, there is no point in going back a week later."

Irwin is looking towards Japan as the next possible arena for world Service Television. Advertising could be a way to finance part of the operation, but as he is quick to emphasise, he is talking about advertising outside Europe. Nor has Irwin ruled out the possibility of sponsorship of individual programmes along American lines. News and current affairs, he adds in the same breath, would never and can never be sponsored.

Satellite television is the riskiest business at its riskiest. Everyone knows that there is stiff competition to beam into the homes of the world's viewers. But the old adage of quality not quantity is the selling point of BBC World Service Television that will, hopes Irwin, attract enthusiastic customers.

They know the audience is there, and they believe the audience wants what BBC World Service Television has to offer — because of its commitment to good programmes. As John Ramsland said to succinctly when asked what it was that made WS TV different: "It gives more."

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## Indians vote for new parliament Gandhi hopes to return to power

NEW DELHI (AP) — Indians voted Monday in the first round of a parliamentary election that former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi hopes will return him to power in the world's most populous democracy.

Five people were killed in clashes between political rivals that disrupted voting at some of 240,000 polling stations, Indian news agencies reported.

Balloting was suspended at 20 of those sites after hooligans overran the stations or stole ballot boxes, election officials said.

A 3-year-old boy was killed when he was caught in the crossfire of a gunbattle in a village in Uttar Pradesh, United News of India reported.

An election official and two voters were killed in the north-eastern state of Bihar, and one person was killed in a bomb blast in West Bengal state, the agency said. Men firing rifles from a car killed two people in Bagmati, north of New Delhi.

Election officials said a curfew was imposed on the city of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh after a series of riots.

Ten other people were killed on the eve of the election in New Delhi and elsewhere.

In Muradnagar, a town of 35,000 located 30 miles (50 kilometres) east of New Delhi, hundreds of people battled each other with stones and clubs after a Hindu candidate allegedly struck his Muslim rival.

Eight people were injured, four seriously. Paramilitary troops separated the fighters and took up positions around the polling station.

"The violence was expected because all candidates are rogues and rascals," said one bystander.

Violence is endemic in Indian politics. Although more than 100 people were killed in election-related incidents in the past month, Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan said the campaign was more peaceful than he expected.

Voting was held Monday for 201 of the 543 elected seats in the Lok Sabha, or lower house of parliament.

Other districts will vote Thursday and Sunday, in a staggered pattern allowing security forces to shift to various trouble spots. The ballot count begins May 27.

Since the last election 18 months ago, India has had two minority governments, the first led by V.P. Singh of the Janata Dal Party and the second by Chandra Shekhar of a breakaway Janata Dal faction.

Opinion polls forecast that Congress, which has governed India for all but four years since independence in 1947, would emerge the largest party but fall short of a majority.

A light rain battered New Delhi and the air was slightly cooler than the suffocating heat that normally envelops northern India at this time of year.



Rajiv Gandhi

The turnout was reported slow at first, but appeared to pick up during the day. The average turnout in general elections is 58 per cent.

A right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party has emerged as the country's no. 2 party, breaking the traditional election model of centre versus the left.

Bharatiya Janata campaigned on a platform of Hindu assertiveness, promising to end the special protection accorded to Muslims and other minorities.

In the Hindu model of the modern secular state, as opposed to the Nehru model of a modern secular state, advocates economic liberalisation and less government interference.

The campaign focused on the place of Hinduism and caste in modern India, issues that split the

nation and led to widespread violence last year.

But opinion surveys indicated voters are more concerned with inflation and jobs. Official figures, which considered conservative, say prices rose to 12 per cent from 8 per cent last year. Inflation's effect, which united anti-Congress forces in 1989, was expected to influence Chandra Shekhar, making any national government, was likely to fare poorly.

About 177 million eligible voters live in the nine states voting Monday. India's register of 514 million voters made the election the largest exercise in democracy the world has seen.

More than 15 million policemen were on election duty, and 53,000 paramilitary troops of the Central Reserve Police Force were sent to areas which the Election Commission has labelled "sensitive".

Elections have been postponed until June in Punjab, the centre of the Sikh movement, and in the eastern state of Assam, where militants are campaigning to issue the Indian federalism. The two states control a total of 27 parliament seats.

No elections are being held in the six constituencies of Kashmir, which is facing a rebellion by pro-Pakistan and pro-independence Muslim militants.

Elections have been postponed in three constituencies in other states where candidates have died.



## Croatia endorses independence

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (AP) — Croats have overwhelmingly endorsed sovereignty for the republic, the second of Yugoslavia's six states to take that step.

The Croatian referendum Commission announced early Monday that with 70 per cent of the vote counted more than 94 per cent of Croats supported sovereignty. The vote also claims the republic's right to form alliances with other secessionist Yugoslav states.

Final results are expected Tuesday.

Slovenia in December also voted for independence. Both republics favour transforming Yugoslavia into a loose federation and have threatened to break away if they fail.

It was not immediately clear what action will be taken by Croatia, which has been wracked by clashes between Croatian nationalists and ethnic Serbs who seek to join neighbouring Serbia.

In Slovenia, where voters endorsed secession by 95 per cent, officials have taken steps to issue the republic's own passports and currency.

The ethnic and political disputes have blocked Croatia from taking over the eight-member federal presidency, crippling the nation's civilian leadership and raising fears of military intervention.

The commission said about 80 per cent of Croatia's 3.65 million registered voters went to the polls, but about 100,000 registered ethnic Serbs boycotted the referendum.

As he voted, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman told the Associated Press that he thought Yugoslavia was finished as a unified nation.

"Serbia has already destroyed the foundations of Yugoslavia," and an alliance of sovereign states is the only recourse, he said.

"If that is not possible, then we will decide to secede and go our independent way," he said.

Communist-run Serbia and Croatia long have divided by rivalries and their current struggle is over Yugoslavia's future. Serbia, the largest of the nation's six republics, wants a federation tightly controlled by a central government.

The West has urged Yugoslavia to remain united.

Meanwhile, the federal government of Premier Ante Markovic said Sunday it would "propose and undertake measures conducive to resolving" Yugoslavia's political crisis, the Tanjug news agency reported. The report did not elaborate.

The government has already formed a seven-man "coordinating committee" headed by Markovic to try to help end political disputes and ethnic strife.

Meanwhile a newspaper reported Sunday that the U.S. government has quietly suspended all economic assistance to Yugoslavia, including support for loans and credits from international financial institutions.

The Khmer Rouge have filled their war chest with concession fees demanded from the thousands of Thai gem miners who risk rampant malaria and war to cross the border and seek their fortune.

But the so-called guerrilla capital does not look too prosperous.

The centre is deserted except for soldiers and cows, its concrete buildings, mostly ruined by war and neglect, its roads overgrown with weeds.

The local cinema has not shown a film for years.

On the outskirts there are more signs of life. Poor peasants moving back into Cambodia from Khmer Rouge camps in Thailand were erecting wood and thatch houses along the road leading to the Thai border.

The Phnom Penh government has said several times that troops advancing from the garrison city of Battambang have recaptured Pailin.

Pailin, Cambodia (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas are firmly in control of the western Cambodian town of Pailin despite repeated attempts by the Phnom Penh government to drive them out and regain control of its ruby and sapphire mines.

"I'm very pleased we were able to defend Pailin in the past dry season because the enemy have been trying very hard to recapture it," said Lieutenant-General Ee Chien, the Khmer Rouge field commander in charge of the area.

War was not far away during the first visit by a foreign reporter since the Chinese-backed guerrillas captured Pailin, which lies 30 kilometres from the Thai border.

In October 1989 as part of their long-running struggle against Phnom Penh forces.

Artillery shelling could be heard in the distance even though a ceasefire between the rival armies was supposed to be in effect.

Pailin's importance lies in the gem mines scattered across the

## Aquino confident senate will pass bases treaty

MANILA (AP) — President Corason Aquino said Monday she was confident the Philippine Senate would approve any new agreement her administration reached on extending the stay of U.S. military bases.

Mrs. Aquino's statement followed a three-hour meeting Saturday with U.S. ambassador Nicholas Platt, after which both sides reported substantial progress toward a new accord.

Any new agreement must be ratified by two-thirds of the 23-member Senate, where there is strong opposition to the bases.

The current bases agreement expires in September.

"I am confident that a treaty that will be acceptable to me and to our negotiators will have a fair chance of passing the Senate scrutiny," Mrs. Aquino said in a statement. "I believe that such a treaty would have the endorsement of the people."

The sixth round of the year-old negotiations ended early this month without agreement on how much the United States must pay and how long the Americans can stay at Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base.

The two bases are the among the largest and oldest U.S. overseas facilities.

The Philippines has demanded \$825 million in yearly rental for the bases for seven years, \$400 million in cash and the rest in debt reduction and access to the U.S. market.

The United States has offered an annual \$60 million for a 10- to 12-year extension.

On Saturday, Platt said the talks were "moving forward" after the two sides "achieved a measure of progress in understanding each other's position" regarding compensation and duration.

## Slain South Korean student buried in Kwangju

KWANGJU (AP) — A student slain by police was buried Monday and another protester hovered near death as the government of President Roh Tae-woo laboured to defuse the political crisis.

Roh was meeting with top advisers, apparently to discuss measures aimed at alleviating tensions, the presidential office said. News reports said a cabinet shakeup involving the prime minister was imminent.

Prosecutors launched a dragnet Monday to arrest 150 student and dissident leaders for alleged instigation of violent nationwide protests. About 500 protesters sought sanctuary in Seoul's Myongdong Cathedral, and riot police sealed off the Catholic Church.

"Subversive forces are trying to deter and go against the current changes in the world," Prime Minister Ro Jai-Bong told a meeting of businessmen. The government must "isolate these forces trying to thwart democracy," he said.

Asked if he had submitted his resignation as demanded by protesters, Ro reportedly told the group only that "I am just doing my best."

In Kwangju, 262 kilometres (163 miles) south of Seoul, the student slain by police was buried

at a martyr's cemetery in rites the government hoped would symbolically end the most serious anti-government protests in four years.

But reports of another protest critically injured in fighting Monday in Kwangju raised the spectre of more outbreaks.

Since 20-year-old Kang Kyung-Dae was slain on April 26 in Seoul, eight people have gotten themselves on fire to protest his death and six have died. Their actions have shocked Koreans.

Anti-government rallies, many of them violent, have been held in more than 75 cities.

Roh fired a cabinet minister in charge of police and five riot policemen have been charged in the student's fatal beating.

But critics say it's not enough. Tens of thousands of dissidents, students, workers and opposition politicians have participated in rallies, street marches and demonstrations demanding that Roh fire the cabinet and make sweeping political and economic reforms.

Dissidents said uniformed riot policemen beat and critically injured a protester in a clash before dawn Monday. Kwangju's Chonnam University Hospital confirmed that a man was near death from an apparent beating.

## South Africa relents partly on land restitution

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's government, reforming apartheid laws, said on Monday it would return at least some property taken from blacks and would legislate against discrimination.

In a climbdown from President F.W. De Klerk's original rejection of restitution for apartheid wrongs, Planning Minister Henus Kriel said the government proposed to set up an all-party commission to adjudicate land claims.

"The government is not insensitive to the cause of people or communities who were possibly disadvantaged in the past and is therefore prepared to establish an advisory commission in this regard," Kriel told a news conference.

He also announced a softening of measures to protect standards in white areas that will be opened to all races when the bills are passed in parliament, probably within the next six weeks.

He said white owners of private land would still be allowed to reject black tenants, but "no local authority or group of people will be able to make racially based by-laws."

This is only the second time the government has agreed to outlaw a specific form of race discrimination by private citizens. The other was a ban on racial clauses in land-sale contracts passed by parliament earlier this year.

Ruling National Party member Piet Marais, chairman of the Parliamentary Land Committee, said the new proposals were drawn up in consultation with a range of groups and individuals.

He said the land commission of the anti-apartheid African National Congress (ANC) made written and oral submissions and white supremacists were also heard.

"I think I can say we were more than fair in the time we allocated to right-wing views," Marais said.

He did not say whether the ANC or right-wingers approved the proposals which partly reverse a controversial package of five draft laws published earlier this year.

The bills were introduced to fell one of the most important remaining pillars of apartheid — legislation reserving 87 per cent of South Africa's land for the white minority.

## Free trip for air travellers stranded by computer fault

PARIS (R) — France's domestic airline Air Inter offered free round trips to 1,200 passengers stranded by a computer fault overnight at Paris's Orly Airport.

Air Inter President Jean-Cyril Spinetta said a faulty computer blocked evening flight plans and air traffic control refused to lift a ban on flying after midnight. The airline could only find a few dozen hotel rooms and hundreds of travellers spent the night in the terminal until flights resumed in the morning. Spinetta said Air Inter was not responsible for the fault but offered its passengers free flights to make up for the inconvenience.

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## Opposition politician jailed in Burma

BANGKOK (R) — Burma's military rulers have sentenced another opposition politician to a long jail term, a diplomat said Monday.

Che Chit Kyaw Naing, head of the anti-fascist People's Freedom League, was sentenced to seven years jail on May 12, said the diplomat, who was contacted in

Rangoon by telephone and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Che Chit Kyaw Naing was accused of having contacts with a banned student group and had been detained since Jan. 19, the diplomat said.

Authorities have jailed most of the country's opposition leaders since ignoring the result of the

## Bangladesh storms

Violent storms killed more than 70 people and injured 1,000 in Bangladesh as a U.S. task force stepped up efforts to save millions made destitute by a catastrophic cyclone last month, officials said Monday.

They said that of 70 confirmed dead, at least 25 were killed when winds gusting at up to 120 mph (193 km/h) pounded Gournadi and Agulphar areas in the densely-populated coastal district of Barisal Sunday night.

"Losses are widespread," said one official. He said thousands of homes were flattened and a break in power supply blacked out a vast area.

The Bangladesh News Agency said 70 per cent of homes in 70 per cent of crops in the affected areas were destroyed.

Thirty-seven people were missing feared drowned after two boats capsized in rainstorms Sunday — one in Narasingdi district near Dhaka and another in the flood-stricken Sylhet area, police said.

A U.S. task force of nearly 7,000 Marines, dozens of helicopters and hovercraft arrived last Wednesday to ferry supplies to cyclone survivors, set up water purification plants and treat thousands of people with diarrhoeal diseases.

Information Secretary Manzurul Hossain said Sunday the flood-impacted hampered Operation Sea Angels which had now extended relief work to the northeast.

A U.S. Marine's Blackhawk helicopter lifted 20 tonnes of food, medicine and cloth from Dhaka to marooned people in Mahiganj, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar and Sylhet districts Sunday.

Sylhet official Abdul Hassem said about 200 people and helicopters were due to fly to Sylhet.

"The massive relief effort by the task force has brought new hopes to thousands of marooned people facing hunger, disease, snakes and pirates," he told Reuters by telephone Monday.

Congressmen in the United States are sceptical whether the law meets their demands. Congress had made its passage a condition for extending trade benefits and credits.

Deputies Monday complained the law would benefit a small minority, reflecting fears it will help intellectuals travel abroad, at the expense of workers, and speculators to make vast profits by bringing back and selling scarce consumer goods.

Ministers have been at pains to shoot this idea down, pointing to high levels of unemployment and tough entry visa restrictions in the West.

Parliamentary committees have acknowledged freedom to travel will entail billions of dollars in additional spending.

But some journalists have suggested deputies' reluctance was linked to fears of doing away with long-established controls over the daily lives of ordinary Soviet people.

## Colombian drug lords to free kidnapped journalists

BOGOTA (R) — Colombia's drug lords have said they would free two kidnapped journalists and a mediator said their release could be the prelude to the surrender of cocaine boss Pablo Escobar.

"We have ordered the release of Francisco Santos and Maruja Parra," the drug traffickers, known as the "enterrables," said in a statement sent to news organisations in Medellin, base of Escobar's powerful drug cartel.

The traffickers did not say when or where the journalists would be freed and added that they were acting in response to a plea from a well-known Catholic priest, Rafael Garcia Herberos.

They said they wanted to erase any suggestion they were trying to put pressure on an elected assembly meeting to reform the constitution as well as to decide the future of extradition, a key weapon against the drug lords.

Garcia Herberos, who recently held secret talks with Escobar, said he believed the journalists would be freed within the next two to three days.

He said on local radio that the extraditables' move was a possible step towards the surrender of

Escobar, Colombia's most wanted drug lord.

"(Escobar) believes in Colombia. He believes in the president and he believes that justice will be done without exaggerations," he said.

Santos, 28, news editor of the influential El Tiempo newspaper, was kidnapped by gunmen in Bogota eight months ago and his driver was shot dead.

Pachon, director of the Colombian film institute Ecovine and a member of a prominent political family, was kidnapped in Bogota last November.

There has been worldwide clamour for their release, including an appeal from Pope John Paul II.

In Colombia, sympathisers held church services praying for their release and television news broadcasts routinely began with a reminder of how long they had been kidnapped.

"There are no words to express the happiness we feel," Francisco Santos's brother Camilo said in response to the drug traffickers' statement.

The traffickers kidnapped nine journalists last year in an effort to influence government drug policy.

## Cameroon protesters step up pressure on government

DOUALA, Cameroon (R) — Street protests against the one-party government of Cameroon President Paul Biya went on long into the night in the port city of Douala after the army stopped and then allowed an opposition march to go ahead.

About 50,000 people chanting "Biya thief" marched Sunday to a square where opposition leaders vowed the protest would continue until Biya resigns or holds a national conference.

Biya, in power for nine years, has yielded to pressure to legalise opposition parties but continues to reject calls for a national conference.

Signalling a hardline stance, Biya, 58, has appointed an army general to restore order in the restive Douala area.

The army intervened directly to try to stop the protesters marching through the city's administrative district. Opposition leaders said they were allowed to continue when they pledged the protest would remain peaceful.

Spokesmen said they could not guarantee the campaign would remain peaceful and vowed to keep up the pressure on Biya.

"If Biya does not resign tonight, tomorrow he will," screamed a militant opposition spokeswoman to wild applause.

Many tired demonstrators were heading home in groups but most stayed in the city centre, prompting fears of unrest later.

Protest organisers have declared Monday a day of mourning for people killed in clashes with security forces since the agitation for greater democracy began last year.

Monday is also National Day but opposition leaders called on all Cameroonians to boycott the official programme and urged parents to keep their children away from school parades.

Taxi drivers were asked to stay at home and everybody was directed to wear clothes signifying mourning — white for Muslims and black for others.

How such calls are obeyed will be seen as a real test of the power of the opposition alliance of 14 political parties.

Teenage opposition militants vowed they will stop and set ablaze any taxis plying the streets after midnight.

At least four people were killed in clashes between pro-democracy demonstrators and police Thursday.

Many residents of Douala continued stock-piling food and other consumer goods in anticipation of a protracted shut-down of the city. Opposition spokesmen said the country will be "dead" from Tuesday until a national conference is called.

The campaign is due to climax Friday when opposition leaders meet to fix a unilateral date for the start of a national conference, with or without Biya's sanction.